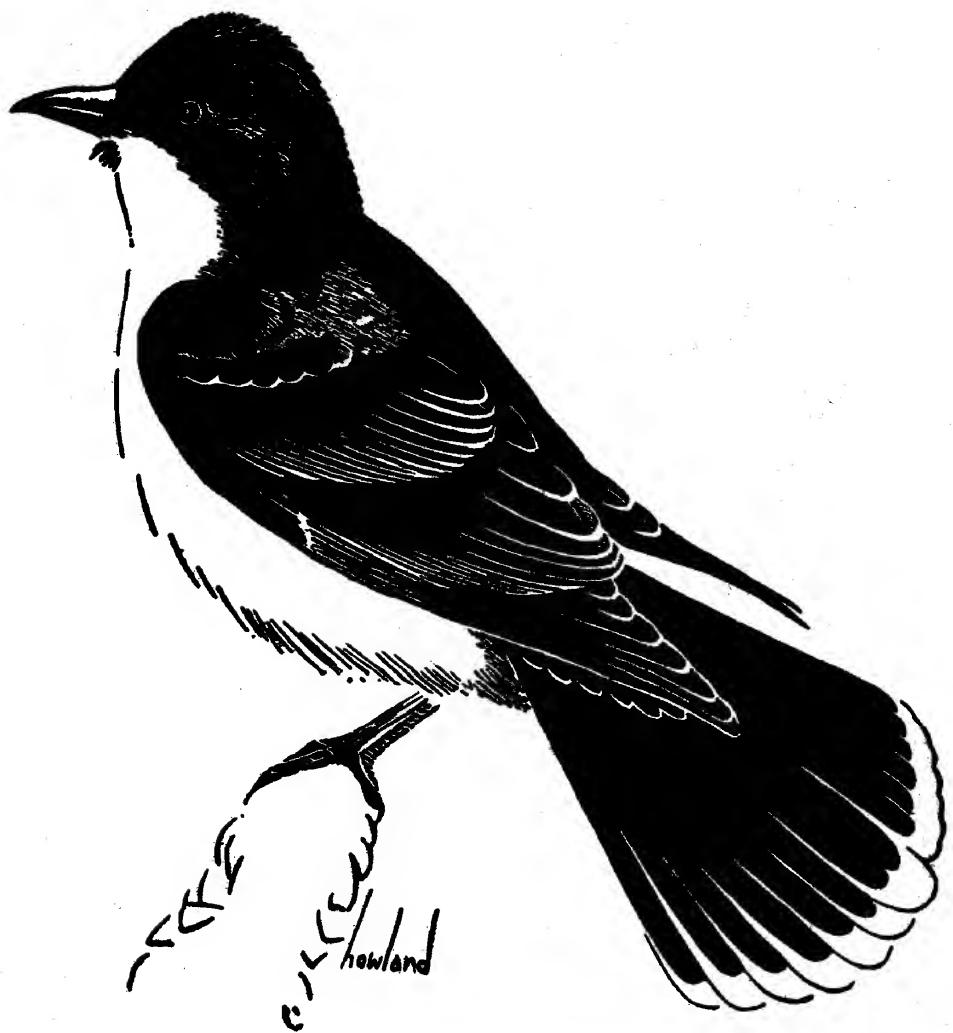


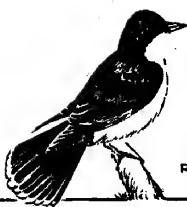
# *The* **KINGBIRD**



VOLUME XIII, No. 2

May • 1963

**FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC.**



# The KINGBIRD

PUBLICATION OF THE FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC.

Vol. XIII No. 2

May 1963

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## The EDITOR'S Page

The Jamestown Audubon Society very ably handled the details necessary for the successful meeting of the State Federation in that city on the weekend of April 26, 27 and 28. Accomodations, registration, paper sessions, all, were well coordinated. On the field trips members who attended from other parts of the state were introduced to the countryside through which Roger Tory Peterson roamed in his youth. We give our congratulations to the Jamestown Club for handling and completing a very important and trying project. This meeting with a registration of two hundred was the largest in the twelve year history of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc.

The increase in membership since the beginning of the year is most gratifying. Since January 1, 1963 nearly forty new members and two new clubs have joined the federation and a former club has been reinstated.

In two articles in the current issue, the reader will find that the common names of the birds are not capitalized. The editor did not note this omission in time to make the proper change.

Two errors in addresses in the Membership Directory which was printed in the January issue of The Kingbird have been brought to my attention. The correct addresses are Mr. Robert E. Ball, 1689 Meadow Lane Dr., S.E., North Canton 9, Ohio and Mr. James H. Bush, R.D.#1, Box 174, Catskill. If your name and address is not correct, will you please let us know, that we can print it correctly.

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# FOOD HABITS, GROWTH, AND MORTALITY IN NESTING MARSH HAWKS

JOSEPH A. MUNOFF

## INTRODUCTION

The Marsh Hawk, *Circus cyaneus hudsonius*, is one of the most common of the birds of prey. It can be found living in marsh areas throughout most of the United States. This hawk is the only member of the group known as harriers that can be found living in North America.

In the early spring of 1961, a study was undertaken of some marsh hawks which were nesting in Washington County, New York. This study consisted of three main parts. The first portion of the study was on mortality rates among eggs and nestlings. The second phase of the study was to determine the growth rate of young marsh hawks during nest life. The last part of the study was to determine the type and quantity of food being fed to the nestlings by the adult female.

A review of the literature on marsh hawks revealed that many studies have been made on the food habits of this species. Most researchers agree, however, that the food habits vary greatly according to the prey species available, the season and the locality. The literature on mortality rates is limited, and literature on systematic growth-rate studies seems to be lacking entirely.

## THE STUDY AREAS

The study took place in two marshes located in Washington County, New York. Most of the data was acquired in Wood Creek marsh which is located in Kingsbury Township. The more exact location of this marsh is 43 degrees, 19 minutes, 15 seconds, north latitude and 73 degrees, 31 minutes, west longitude. The nearest obvious landmarks are the Champlain Canal, which borders the northwest side, and Wood Creek, which borders the east side of the marsh.

A lesser amount of data was acquired in Dead Creek marsh, which is located in Argyle Township at 43 degrees, 17 minutes, north latitude and 73 degrees, 31 minutes, 30 seconds, west longitude.

Wood Creek marsh was the location for the growth-rate and food-habit studies. Marsh hawk nests from both marshes were utilized in the mortality study.

Both marshes appeared to be in the same approximate stage of succession. The water level was low and open water could be seen in very few places. The greater area of each marsh consisted of dead, wind-blown cattails (*Typha*) and scattered growths of *Spirea*. Underneath the dead cattails, the mud varied from a few inches to about two feet in depth. The wetter areas contained a new growth of cattails which were green and erect. The water level in the area of the growing cattails varied from a few inches to about fifteen inches in depth.

The four nests studied in Wood Creek marsh were arranged in a north-south line. The distance between nests varied from approximately forty to about two hundred yards.

The remaining two nests used in this study were approximately one hundred and fifty yards apart on an imaginary east-west line in Dead Creek marsh.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study concerning the mortality rate among eggs and young was begun on May 21, 1961. The first of six nests was discovered on that date, and each was kept under weekly observation from time of discovery until it was destroyed or until the young attained flight. On each trip to the marsh, a record was made of the number of healthy-looking eggs present, the number of eggs destroyed or missing, the number of young present and alive, and the number of young dead or missing. In this manner, egg and young losses were recorded shortly after they occurred.



**The predator becomes the prey. -This is nest #3 located in Wood Creek Marsh and included in the mortality study. It was completely destroyed after three of the six eggs therein had hatched.**

The growth rate study was made on four young hawks living in one of the nests (nest 5) used in the mortality study. Daily visits were made to this nest as the eggs approached hatching. When each hawk was one day old, daily weights and measurements were begun and repeated approximately every twenty-four hours. After each nestling reached the age of 14 days, daily measurements were discontinued and replaced by less frequent weight and measurement taking. All measurement taking ceased after July 22nd because the three oldest birds flew away and the fourth was found dead.

The individual weights were recorded in grams. A triple beam balance was used. At first the young could be easily weighed by placing them on the platform of the scale. As they became more active it was necessary to place them in containers to be weighed. Each day, the container was weighed and this weight was subtracted from the totals.

All linear measurements were recorded in millimeters and made with the aid of simple tools such as calipers, dividers, a wooden board, and a meter stick.

Measurements were made of each bird's length, and this was considered to be the distance from the tip of the bill to the tip of the longest rectrix (or pygostyle, before the tail feathers began to grow). To accomplish this

task, the bird was placed flat on its dorsal side on a wooden board. The commissure of the bill was brought parallel to this board.

The extent of each hawk was measured from tip to tip of the longest primaries of the outstretched wings as the bird lay on its dorsal side on a wooden board. The wings were gripped at the "wrist" joints to accomplish this task.

In addition, the right wing was measured from the end of the carpo-metacarpus where it joins the ulmure to the end of the phalanges of the third digit. When the primaries began to grow from the third digit, the measurement was made to the tip of the longest primary. This chord measurement was made without straightening the curvature of the wing.

Measurements were made of the tail, bill, and tarsus. The tail measurements were made from the tip of the longest rectrix to the point between the middle rectrices where they emerge from the skin. The bill measurements were made in a straight line from the tip of the upper mandible to the anterior edge of the cere. Tarsus measurements were made from the point of the joint between the tibia and the tarsometatarsus to the point of the joint at the base of the middle toe in front.

Dividers and calipers were used to make all linear measurements except length and extent. For these two measurements the distances were marked on the board and measured with a meter stick.

For the food-habits study, observations were made from a blind erected on the ground thirty feet from the nest occupied by the four young hawks used in the growth-rate study. The blind was a wooden frame approximately six feet high and three feet square, covered by a green cloth which blended with the *Spirea* that surrounded the bottom half. Observations were made from the blind on July 12 (2 hours), July 13, (4 hours and 15 minutes), July 15 (7 Hours and 45 minutes), July 20 (3 hours), and July 22 (2 hours), a total of 19 hours. These observations were made so as to cover all of the daylight hours between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. at least once. During this time a record was kept of the species and quantities of prey brought to the nestlings by the adult female.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Mortality*

As with certain other ground nesters, the marsh hawk seems to have a high mortality rate. Hammond and Henry (1949) studied the success of marsh hawk nests in North Dakota. They observed 60 nests and found that 43 nests or 72 percent hatched. They also observed 303 eggs and found that 175 eggs or 58 percent hatched. Of the 175 young that hatched only 50 were surviving at 28 days. This is a mortality rate at 71 percent for young in the nest. The over-all mortality rate, if we consider each egg as a potential hawk, (egg loss plus nestling loss) was 83 percent.

Wagner (1933) found that marsh hawks banded just before flying showed a mortality rate of 34 percent. This was over a period of one year and nine months. Most of these losses seemed to be due to hunters and predators. He further concluded that most hunters shoot hawks without bothering to retrieve them. These hawks and the ones which die by other means have a slim chance of being reported. It therefore appeared probable that very few of the banded hawks lived one full year.



**A good provider and her family.** This in nest #5 located in Wood Creek Marsh and included in both the mortality and food-habit studies. This mother brought to her four nestlings an average of 1.3 prey per hour. This figure does not include the prey she consumed herself.

Craighead and Craighead (1956) studied mortality in many species of hawks and found marsh hawks to show the greatest variation in productivity. They found that the failure of marsh hawk eggs to hatch was 22 percent in observations conducted in 1942 and 100 percent in 1948. The Craigheads also found the juvenile mortality (in the nest) to be 11 percent in 1942.

As stated earlier, six nests were found and they contained a total of 28 eggs. Two nests and the 9 eggs therein were destroyed before any hatching occurred. The remaining four nests and the 19 eggs therein showed a 63 percent hatchability. Of the 12 young hawks which were hatched, five (two in one nest and three in another) lived to fly. In total, four nests were completely destroyed, two before hatching and two after some hatching had occurred. This constitutes a nest loss of 66-2/3 percent. The total loss was 7 nestlings plus 16 eggs from the original 28 eggs. If each of the 28 eggs was fertilized and therefore represented a potential young hawk, then the mortality rate was 82 percent (Table 1).

**TABLE 1**  
**ANALYSIS OF EGG AND YOUNG LOSS**  
**FOR EACH NEST**

Nest No.	Total No. of Eggs Destroyed	Total No. of young Destroyed	Total Loss	Young Surviving	Mortality Rate in Per Cent
1	2	3	5	-	100
2	3	-	3	-	100
3	3	3	6	-	100
4	6	-	6	-	100
5	1	1	2	3	40
6	1	-	1	2	33
Total 70	16	7	23	5	82

Evidence of predation was found at the scene in practically every case of egg and young loss. This evidence consisted of egg shells broken into many pieces, missing young, deranged nests, and eggs that appeared as though a hole was poked in them. These holes were approximately one inch in diameter. The contents of the broken eggs were always missing.

On numerous occasions, crows and farm dogs were noticed in the general locality of both study areas. Two particular dogs frequented the Wood Creek marsh and another pair was often observed in the Dead Creek area. It was noticed that the dogs always appeared to be hunting. Besides the crows and dogs, it is believed that a number of mammalian and avian predators nocturnally roamed the marsh areas in search of food. Because of the many possibilities involved, it would be difficult to draw precise conclusions concerning the exact cause for each of the destroyed nests, eggs, and nestlings.

#### Growth Rates

As previously stated, a search of the literature did not reveal any systematic study of young marsh hawk growth rates. However, Craighead and Craighead (1956) did weigh 30 male and 13 female marsh hawks to find an average weight for this species. The weights of the 43 birds averaged 521 grams. This compares favorably with weights taken in this study of 28 day old hawks which averaged 510 grams. Another investigator, Shelly (1935) studied growth in captive marsh hawks but detailed measurements were not made.

*Weight.* The greatest increase in weight was during the second week, when the young averaged a daily gain of 24 grams. During the fourth and third weeks the average daily gain diminished to 18 and 16 grams respectively. The week of slowest weight increase was the first week, when each nestling gained an average of 11 grams per day.

*Length.* The greatest increase in length occurred during the second week. The length of each hawk increased on an average of 13mm per day at this time. The average daily increase was 10mm and 9mm during the fourth and third weeks respectively. The period of slowest growth in length was during the first week, when each nestling averaged a daily increase of 8mm.

*Extent* The extent measurement showed the greatest increase during the second week. During this time, each nestling's wingspread averaged a daily increase of 36mm. During the third week, the increase diminished to 30mm daily. The extent growth averaged 26mm and 16mm daily during the fourth and first weeks respectively.

*Wing.* The wing measurement increased most rapidly during the third week because of the fast developing primaries. The average daily increase during this time was 10mm. Wing growth was almost as rapid during the fourth week when the daily increase averaged 9mm. This average was 8mm during the second week and the slowest wing growth was during the first week, when the nestlings averaged an increase of 2mm daily.

*Tarsus.* The tarsus averaged 4mm of daily growth for the second week, 3mm for the first week, 2mm for the third week and 1mm for the fourth week.

*Beak.* The beak grew most rapidly during the first week. At that time

the average daily increase was less than 1mm. The beak growth rate steadily diminished during the second, third and fourth weeks.

*Tail.* No tail feathers could be noticed during the first week. By the end of the second week the rectrices had grown a total of 17mm. These feathers averaged a daily increase of 6mm and 8mm during the third and fourth weeks respectively.

If one considers the measurements of weight, length, and extent as being most indicative of general growth, it can be concluded that the second week was the period of most rapid growth for nestlings. Also, in this respect, the period of slowest growth occurred during the first week of nest life. (Nest life for the four nestlings in this study varied in duration from 25 to 29 days). Average and extreme measurements and the ages at which they were made may be seen by consulting Tables 2 and 3.

TABLE 2  
AVERAGE GROWTH RATE OF YOUNG MARSH HAWKS

Age (days)	Weight (gm)	Length (mm)	Extent (mm)
1	25 (21-27)	91 (89-95)	92 (89-101)
2	32 (28-35)	97 (95-101)	100 (95-108)
3	41 (37-47)	108 (101-114)	122 (114-127)
4	52 (45-58)	115 (113-117)	139 (127-152)
5	66 (61-75)	122 (120-127)	158 (146-171)
6	86 (80-100)	134 (127-139)	184 (170-192)
7	102 (87-108)	145 (140-156)	204 (190-215)
8	128 (118-136)	150 (145-156)	241 (219-266)
9	159 (143-189)	166 (152-175)	272 (254-280)
10	180 (164-204)	178 (165-185)	302 (292-310)
11	206 (188-236)	193 (180-205)	339 (327-345)
12	228 (205-264)	207 (195-215)	380 (365-390)
13	249 (232-274)	223 (218-235)	419 (400-435)
14	273 (247-312)	237 (227-260)	455 (437-465)
21	387 (329-477)	299 (287-323)	665 (646-710)
24	442 (371-578)	324 (310-342)	739 (716-784)
28*	510 (428-597)	368 (355-380)	849 (811-887)

\*Averages for the twenty-eighth day are based on data gathered from two individuals. All other averages are based on data obtained from four individuals.

TABLE 3  
AVERAGE GROWTH RATE OF YOUNG MARSH HAWKS

Age (days)	Wing (mm)	Beak (mm)	Tarsus (mm)	Tail (mm)
1	19 (17-20)	6 (6-7)	18 (14-22)	—
2	20 (18-21)	7 (6-7)	19 (14-23)	—
3	22 (19-24)	8 (7-8)	24 (23-25)	—
4	24 (22-27)	8 (8-8)	28 (26-30)	—
5	28 (26-29)	8 (8-9)	30 (28-32)	—
6	32 (30-33)	9 (9-10)	34 (31-38)	—
7	36 (34-38)	10 (9-10)	38 (35-40)	—
8	42 (40-43)	10 (9-11)	42 (38-45)	—
9	50 (46-54)	11 (10-11)	47 (44-49)	—
10	57 (55-59)	11 (10-12)	53 (51-56)	—
11	65 (64-66)	11 (11-12)	55 (51-58)	5 (4-7)
12	73 (72-73)	12 (11-13)	60 (59-63)	9 (8-10)
13	82 (80-85)	13 (12-13)	65 (63-68)	12 (11-14)
14	94 (92-95)	13 (12-14)	68 (65-71)	17 (12-20)
21	166 (154-177)	15 (14-16)	82 (78-89)	61 (52-66)
24	193 (186-205)	16 (15-16)	84 (80-90)	81 (64-90)
28*	230 (220-240)	16 (16-16)	89 (86-92)	116 (115-116)

\*Averages for the twenty-eighth day are based on data gathered from two individuals. All other averages are based on data obtained from four individuals.

## FOOD HABITS

A review of the literature reveals that the diet of marsh hawks may vary according to the time of year, the prey species available, and the geographical location.

Studies conducted by Fisher (1893) and McAtee (1935) showed that mice and other small rodents were the primary foods of marsh hawks. These studies were based on stomachs collected from many parts of the United States. Breckenridge (1935) found that passerines and mice, in that order, were primary marsh hawk foods. He also stated that most of the food, if considered by weight, was striped ground squirrels and young cottontails. Errington and Breckenridge (1936) found that squirrels were taken in greater numbers than mice in summer at Madison, Wisconsin. Randall (1940), in Pennsylvania, found mice to be the primary food during the year except for June and July. During those months, mice were second to passerines. Sowls (1948), at Delta, Manitoba, found the principal foods of marsh hawks to be mice and fledgling blackbirds. Hecht (1951), also at Delta, found that meadow mice were the principal food with nestling redwing blackbirds second, young American Coots third, and young muskrats fourth. He also found that marsh hawks consumed other birds and mammals in lesser numbers. Craighead and Craighead (1956) found the summer diet of marsh hawks to consist of over 50 percent meadow mice, about 30 percent small and medium-sized birds, and rabbits, ground squirrels, and rats in small numbers.

During the 19 hours spent in the blind observing food habits, 24 visits to the nest by the adult female were recorded. She carried a prey to the young on each visit. The prey recorded were 19 meadow mice (*Microtus*), 4 meadow jumping mice (*Zapus*) and one passerine bird. On the basis of these observations, the mother hawk brought to the four nestlings an average of 1.3 prey per hour. This figure does not include the prey that must have been consumed by the mother hawk on her trips to and from the nest. The figure also does not include the prey caught and consumed by the adult male. Other observations (though informal) made throughout the spring and summer in both marshes showed the marsh hawk diet to be exclusively mice. (This is interesting to note because further observations made throughout the summer, fall, and winter indicated that Wood Creek marsh had a high pheasant population. No evidence of any kind was found that would indicate marsh hawk predation upon pheasants took place.)

The meadow mouse population in Wood Creek marsh during the summer of 1961 was suspected to have been at its peak. The almost complete absence of meadow mice the following summer, 1962, helped to further substantiate this suspicion.

Admittedly, the food habit data gathered in this study is limited. However, on the basis of the observations that were made, it appeared that the abundance of pheasants was insignificant to the marsh hawks studied. They seemed to show a decided preference for preying on the abundant meadow mice.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Harry Goldman of Glens Falls, my collaborator, who kept a photographic record and also assisted with much of the field work. I also wish to thank Mr. Goldman for the use of the photographs which appear in this article.

During the course of this study, advice and assistance were received from Dr. George S. Hunt of the University of Michigan and Dr. Allen H. Benton of the State University of New York at Fredonia. I wish to thank them, and also Dr. E. M. Reilly, Jr. and Dr. Ralph Palmer of the New York State Museum and Science Service, each of whom read the manuscript and made helpful suggestions. Dr. Palmer also loaned me the use of important reference material, for which I am grateful.

Others I wish to thank for their help are my wife Barbara, Thomas Gorman of Glens Falls, and William Wetherbee of Fort Edward, New York.

---

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The Kingbird is a publication of The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc., which has been organized to further the study of bird life and to disseminate knowledge thereof, to educate the public in the need of conserving natural resources and to encourage the establishment and maintenance of sanctuaries and protected areas. Individual member's dues are \$3.00 annually and all individual members receive the Kingbird. A member wishing to make an additional contribution may become a Sustaining Member (\$5) a Supporting Member (\$10) or a Life Member (\$100—"payable over a four-year period in equal installments until the full amount is paid", if member so desires.) For all classes of membership contact the treasurer, Kenneth B. Niven, 61 Broadway, Monticello.

#### MID - WINTER WATERFOWL COUNT — 1963

The ninth mid winter waterfowl count of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc. was carried out from January 12 to 20, 1963. A ground and aerial survey was conducted by the State Conservation Department during January 9 to 18, 1963. The Federation count included 36 species in its total of 195,838 birds. This total is in good agreement with the Conservation Department total of 219,980 — 236,850 birds.

Brant have been seen in higher numbers in recent years, while the Pied-billed Grebe, Canvasback and Coot have been seen in lower numbers. This year the Mute Swan and the Common Eider represents new high totals for the state. The Horned and Pied-billed Grebes, Canvasback, Surf Scoter, Hooded and Common Mergansers, represent new low totals for the state.

The absence of Region 4 in the Conservation Department data is due to the presence of ice within the area covered.

The total waterfowl counts are shown by regions in the following table:

"Summary Totals" are given where the Department totals for local areas are different from the totals on the State Summary Sheet. This difference is mainly within Region 10. Copies of the Conservation Department local surveys will be forwarded (with thanks) to each regional leader; Regions 1-10, respectively; Edward L. Seeber, Walter C. Listman, Dr. Sally Hoyt, Leslie E. Bemont, Dr. David B. Peakall, Arthur W. Allen, George McChesney, Guy Bartlett, Edward D. Treacy, John J. Elliott.

Sincerely, John L. Michell, 345 Conrad Dr., Rochester 16

FEDERATION N. Y. STATE BIRD CLUBS, WATERFOWL CENSUS JANUARY, 1963

	Region I	II	III 1	IV	V 2	VI	VIII	IX	X A	X B	N. Y. State
Common Loon	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	2	77	82
Red-throated Loon	—	—	104	—	2	—	—	—	1	31	32
Horned Grebe	—	1	3	—	3	—	—	—	219	305	631
Pied-billed Grebe	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12	18
Mute Swan	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	815	823
Whistling Swan	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
Canada Goose	2	—	157	—	125	—	—	—	316	1298	1898
Brant	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	80	20027	20107
Snow Goose	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
Mallard	447	8	842	496	823	33	158	575	567	4217	8166
Black Duck	992	18	2092	122	957	801	1154	174	1883	13896	22089
Gadwall	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	117	118
Pintail	15	—	—	—	4	—	1	—	—	43	63
Green-winged Teal	2	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	6	50	60
European Widgeon	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
American Widgeon	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	219	2085	2310
Shoveler	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	36	42
Wood Duck	—	1	3	—	—	—	—	1	2	4	11
Redhead	78	8	6325	186	402	1	—	—	—	43	7043
Ring-necked Duck	1	—	12	—	—	—	—	48	—	299	360
Canvasback	3641	16	2665	15	337	3	2	1	2258	2088	11026
Scaup, All or Greater	3504	1325	3144	—	4573	345	2	—	14867	53576	81336
Scaup, Lesser	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	23	87	111
Common Goldeneye	4220	1440	585	14	1009	2030	30	155	507	4255	14245
Bufflehead	304	46	93	—	38	—	—	1	743	879	2104
Oldsquaw	2500	124	4	—	74	23	—	—	26	856	3607
Common Eider	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	18	18
King Eider	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	6
White-winged Scoter	16	62	—	—	1	—	—	—	17	10792	10888
Surf Scoter	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	194	194
Common Scoter	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	114	120
Ruddy Duck	—	1	3	—	—	—	—	—	11	76	91
Hooded Merganser	3	—	4	—	1	3	—	8	58	32	109
Common Merganser	1072	84	123	79	3001	200	9	64	103	160	4895
Red-breasted Merganser	91	48	7	—	71	1	—	—	174	1978	2370
Coot	—	—	151	—	1	1	1	7	1	174	336

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	<b>Region</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>II</b>	<b>III</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>VI</b>	<b>VII</b>	<b>VIII</b>	<b>IX</b>	<b>X A</b>	<b>X B</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Sum. Total</b>
Swans -----		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	633	633	—
Geese -----		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	360	1511	1871	—
Brant -----		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	52839	52839	—
Geese and Brant		—	—	—	5	6	—	—	—	—	—	11	—
Mallard -----	205	—	367	3	350	3	—	—	19	330	3707	4984	4659
Black Duck -----	1027	—	2978	260	1030	219	893	177	2055	20902	29541	26991	—
Gadwall -----		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	25	25	—
Pintail -----		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	30	30	—
Green-winged Teal		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	5	—
American Widgeon		—	—	—	—	50	—	—	—	175	5498	5723	—
Shoveler -----		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	20	—
Wood Duck -----		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	—
Canvasback -----	3120	—	3345	560	—	10	—	—	1	592	1475	9103	9253
Redhead -----		—	4825	332	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	5163	—
Scaup -----	5250	1205	3568	1578	335	—	—	—	—	—	—	11936	11926
Scaup and Redhead		—	—	—	—	692	—	—	20	21750	47200	69662	86387
Goldeneye -----	3730	192	1430	450	3828	3115	—	—	10	470	12306	25531	26031
Bufflehead -----	20	4	6	15	—	28	—	—	—	140	1392	1605	1280
Oldsquaw -----	15	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	50	596	666	—
Scoter -----	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	16707	16787	—
Ruddy Duck -----		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	25	—	15	40	—
Merganser -----	4275	417	665	565	1062	1144	—	—	67	455	4738	13388	13543
Coot -----		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	6	—
											219980	236850	



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## RING-NECKS ARE MYSTERIOUS

DONALD D. FOLEY  
Supervising Wildlife Biologist

This does *not* mean ringnecked pheasants, even though they may have their own enigmas! The bird I mean is not so gaudy, but he may be even more neatly dressed; he is not so much sought after by hunters, but he is eagerly noted by bird-watchers. He is the secretive but not too shy diving duck which has only recently "invaded" the East as a breeder — the Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*), also known as ringbill, blackjack or swamp bluebill.

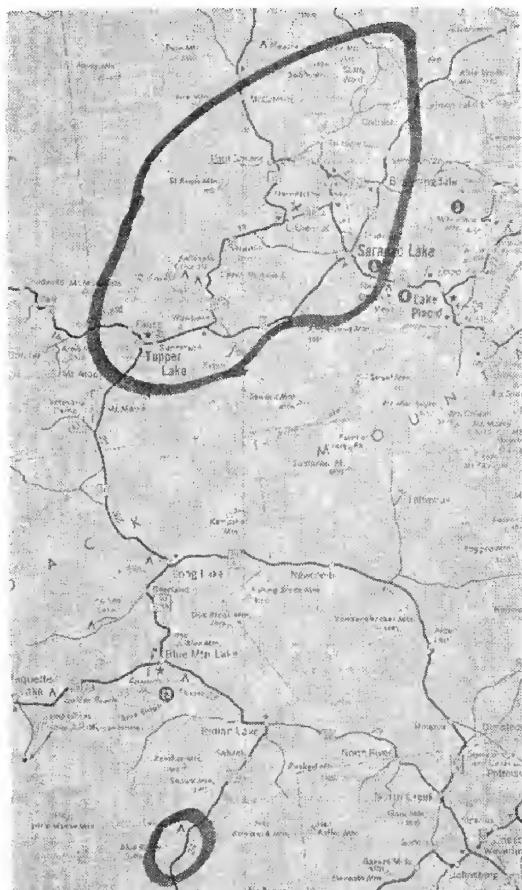
Many things give him an aura of mystery — a tinge of something of the unknown. First of all, he has only been officially noted as living in New York since 1946, when broods were identified on Jones Pond (Figure 1), although he has probably been here since at least the early thirties. The range now occupied in the State is fairly well circumscribed (Figure 2), but we are also learning more each year. The actual habitat the ring-neck has selected here in the East — the wild, boggy ponds and sloughs of Maine, New Brunswick and New York — also excites our interest and amazement. And of their migrations, what do we know? We know little of the birds' movements beyond its home range and wintering ground, since so few have ever been banded — pitifully few in New York — and because it is one of our two native breeding diving duck species. But all this just adds to the glamour and mystery of the bird.



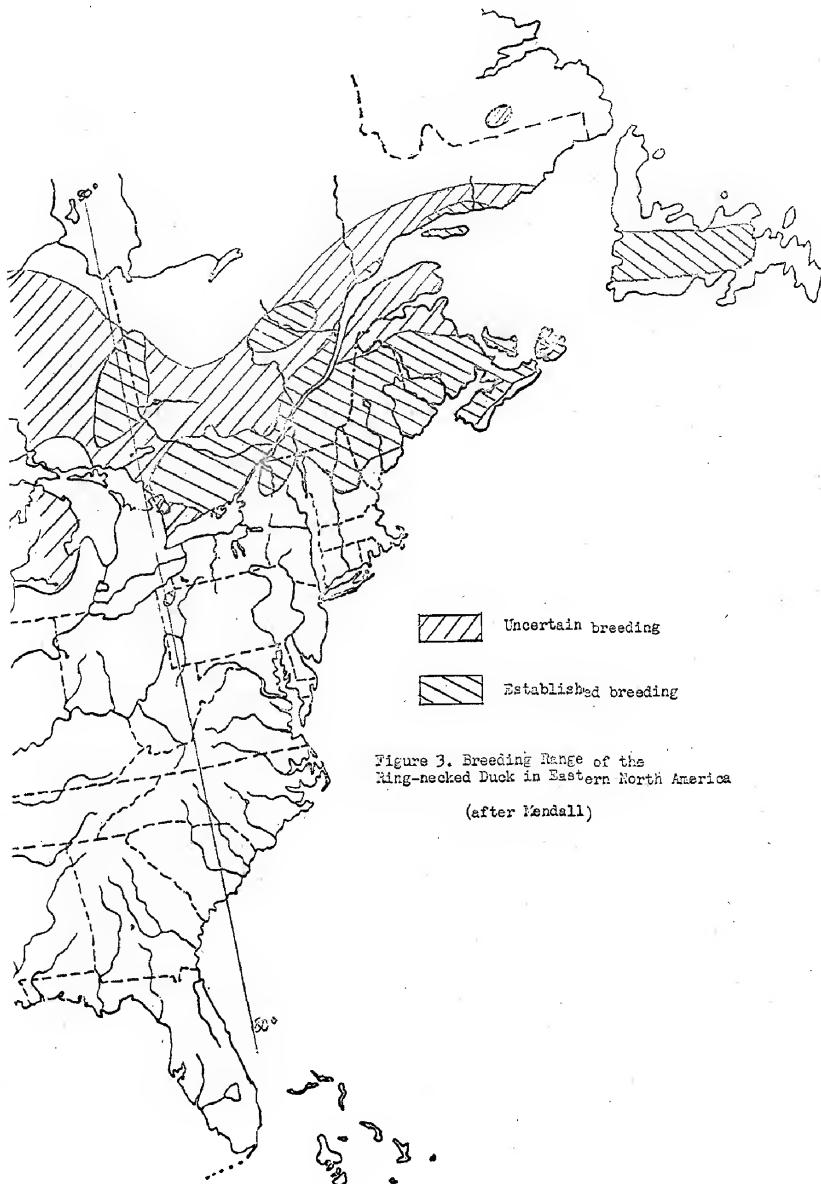
Figure 1. Jones Pond near Gabrels in Franklin County, where Ring-necks were First Found Breeding in New York, in 1946.

While many small, scattered tidbits of ring-neck lore are given in the several standard ornithological texts and manuals, the most authoritative as well as the most entertaining to me is Howard Mendall's "The Ring-necked Duck in the Northeast." It is technically a monograph, and specifically

Bulletin #16, vol. LX, 1958, in the University of Maine series, but let this not frighten you off from the enjoyment of reading it. While I may be partial to anything connected with waterfowl, I know I am not being biased with praise in this case because hardly had I happily savored it when others did too. It was awarded The Wildlife Society Award for Best Publication of the Year. The result of some thirteen years' research, it is at once a discriminating blend of fine investigation, accurate and piquant writing, understanding approach and delightful style and presentation. The most amazing overall effect to me, however, is that with all the new information packed into its pages it still succeeds in maintaining the air of novelty and secrecy around the ringneck.



River downstream. The entire Gaspe Peninsula and much of northern New Brunswick is also suspect. And new areas may certainly be expected south of the known breeding range. Here in New York we might well search in the vicinity of the present Adirondack range, particularly to its west and south. The dot outside the more circumscribed range in New York indicates a brood seen just last summer on Lewey Lake. We should also keep a sharp watch on all the larger wetland areas elsewhere in the State, especially the Conservation Department's Game Management Areas and others



where developments or changes have taken place. On canoe trips in the Adirondacks I would keep a sharp eye out almost anywhere along the Raquette south of their present range, as well as around the Fulton Chain, or on any boggy pond or river slough west of these. Any cattail edge or stand of pickerel-weed, or even the floating mats of lily pads, watershield or *Potamogeton*, may yield a surprise.

It is especially enchanting at sunset, while the trout are again on the the rise or the pike striking viciously at the spoon cast through the weeds, to be interrupted for a while by a displaying pair (early May) or a hen and brood (mid July). Ringnecks seem generally more trusting than most ducks, and on the breeding ground are especially so. Remain real quiet in the canoe, and the watchful female and her 8 or 9 fuzzies may feed past, snapping right and left among the lilies, within 80 or 90 feet.

That delightful family began after the pair was formed out of the group of courting birds which returned northward to the natal area. Almost as soon as the ice went out on April 20, a band of ring-necks appeared on the big marshy lake nearby, and within a week of active feeding, chasing, courting and displaying, our hen chose her mate and retired to a nearby boggy pond where she had learned to fly two years before. (She returned there with another drake last year, too, but her nest was destroyed by a mink during the late stages of incubation, and she did not renest.) This year she selected a marshy island of cattail and bulrush, a tight mat of vegetation, just off a boggy point on the north side of the pond. There in a little pocket about 4 inches above water level, where several old cattail leaves leaned together, she flattened a few stems and laid her first eggs. Within 12 days, the clutch of 10 was complete, and the nest was better formed and deeply lined with down. The nest completion proceeded daily about as fast as eggs were laid, but plant weaving, ramp construction and down plucking took far more effort on the part of the female. The nest was only about a foot from swimmable water, and during incubation the "ramp" (which could be seen only as a sort of tunnel while the observer was in a canoe) was both an entrance into which the hen would quickly disappear as if by magic and a launching pad from which she would flush when danger was imminent. Luckily, this year the pair's secret was not found out, either by avian or four-footed predator, and on June 8, after the drake had begun to believe he would never see his mate again, there she was!

But what is this coming along beside her? Nine small balls of fluffy yellow. And such care she devotes to these tiny things! A day or two of trailing along ignored, while the female gives all her attention to the brood, and the male gives up, flies off to find others like himself and go into the final stages of his eclipse plumage. We should note this successful brood was a real early first hatch, and that most of them we have seen in the Adirondacks (which may reflect re-nests) have been a month or more later.

Where do these molting males go? Even for the Adirondack population, which is very small — perhaps only 50 or 60 pairs — and very localized, we do not know for sure. They may merely join up in small groups of 3 or 4 on some of the larger lakes (the Saranacs, Toppers, Cranberry or others) or perhaps travel farther, to Lake Ontario, the St. Lawrence or Lake Champlain. At any rate, by July 20, adult male ringnecks are a rarity on the breeding grounds.

*Mortality.* And what of the brood that we left the hen so jealously guarding. Our surveys tell us that she is an excellent mother — much better than the wood ducks, mergansers and goldeneyes — and by the time her young are flying at seven to  $7\frac{1}{2}$  weeks she still will have five or six on the average. Snappers and pike take a few to be sure, and even large bullfrogs when the fuzzies are tiny, but ringnecks seem to lose more ground through nest destruction than in duckling mortality. Of course, as mid-October rolls around, many of these locally-reared birds are still in the vicinity, and if it is a favored hunting ground then there is loss to the sportsman too. This happens on Oseetah Lake, Jones Pond and near Tupper, and sometimes the local populations are hit hard. But even more often most of the local birds have moved, sometimes quite a bit north of where they were reared, so that by the time hunting seasons begin their numbers are diluted with other migrants heading southward.

Of the few ringnecks banded in New York (perhaps 650 up to April 1963) and of the fewer recoveries received (about 130), we have found out remarkably little. Birds on migration were those chiefly caught (March, April, October and November), and most recoveries were eventually reported from Ontario, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Quebec and Florida. There must be a wintering population of at least several hundred birds on Long Island (Nissequoque, Carmans, Connetquot and Peconic Rivers, some small ponds and Jamaica Bay Refuge), although we know our aerial survey does not do them justice. Where these birds originate we are not sure, although it could be from the northernmost part of the range in eastern Canada.

The big ringneck wintering states are Florida, Georgia, Alabama and South Carolina — and these are also the big ringneck harvest states — but most of these birds are the product of the "duck factory" range in prairie Canada. We are used to seeing the black duck as the king pin in the waterfowler's harvest, with mallards, wood ducks and sometimes the teal (or the scaups on big waters) also being important. But it was a real surprise to me to recently learn that fully 40 per cent of Florida's annual duck kill is normally composed of ringnecks. This had been reported for several years earlier by the hunters in that state, who call this bird blackjack, but it was verified with a vengeance upon the institution of the Federal wing survey, when thousands of waterfowl wings were mailed in randomly from all across the Flyway. Those of us who worked on this survey soon learned almost automatically to assign ringneck wings to the three southeastern states which seemingly have "cornered the market."

What else do we need to know of this fine little bird? — how best to go about it? — and what can we do to help him if he needs it, as apparently some ducks do? Well, the question marks have to do with (1) what other places in the State does he breed, and in what numbers, and (2) the problem of banding every ringneck we can catch, both on the breeding grounds and wintering. If we can assign wintering areas and annual mortalities to the birds we know breed here, and breeding areas and mortalities to those we know winter here (besides charting in more detail the ringneck migration and hunting areas in New York), we shall be a long way toward more management of this fascinating "resource". This will also in-

clude the part ringnecks play in the hunter's bag when mistaken for illegal redheads, or vice versa.

The Conservation Department has a few new tricks it will try in attempting to band more ringnecks, and there is every hope they will work. A few birds were caught on Long Island this past winter (January-March 1963), and a new night-lighting technique for catching hens with broods will be tried this summer.

Even though we cannot all take part in the more exciting work, what should we do as bird-watchers? Here is that important part of running down reports of possible nesting pairs, of broods seen, and so on, that is nearly impossible for just one or two persons to do. But with everyone interested in birds keeping a special eye out for ringnecks, the job becomes easy. So schedule one or more Adirondack trips this year — birding, fishing, camping, or call them what you will — but try to check out some rumors on, or new territories for, the ringneck. Let a little of the lure of the unknown permeate your rambles, drift silently down a lily-spattered outlet, or wade through leatherleaf to explore that little pond "that's in there somewhere" — and maybe a new page on this neat little diver may be written. We may find out a few more facts about him, but never fear — he'll always remain very mysterious!

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Albany 1



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## A NEST RECORD SCHEME FOR NEW YORK STATE DAVID B. PEAKALL

(Text of talk given at the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs meeting, Jamestown, 1963).

This paper describes a co-operative scheme for the accumulation of information on the breeding biology of birds. This scheme has been run very successfully in the British Isles for a number of years. Information obtained from the British nest record card program is used to illustrate the value of the scheme. At the end of the article plans that have been made to run a similar scheme here are outlined.

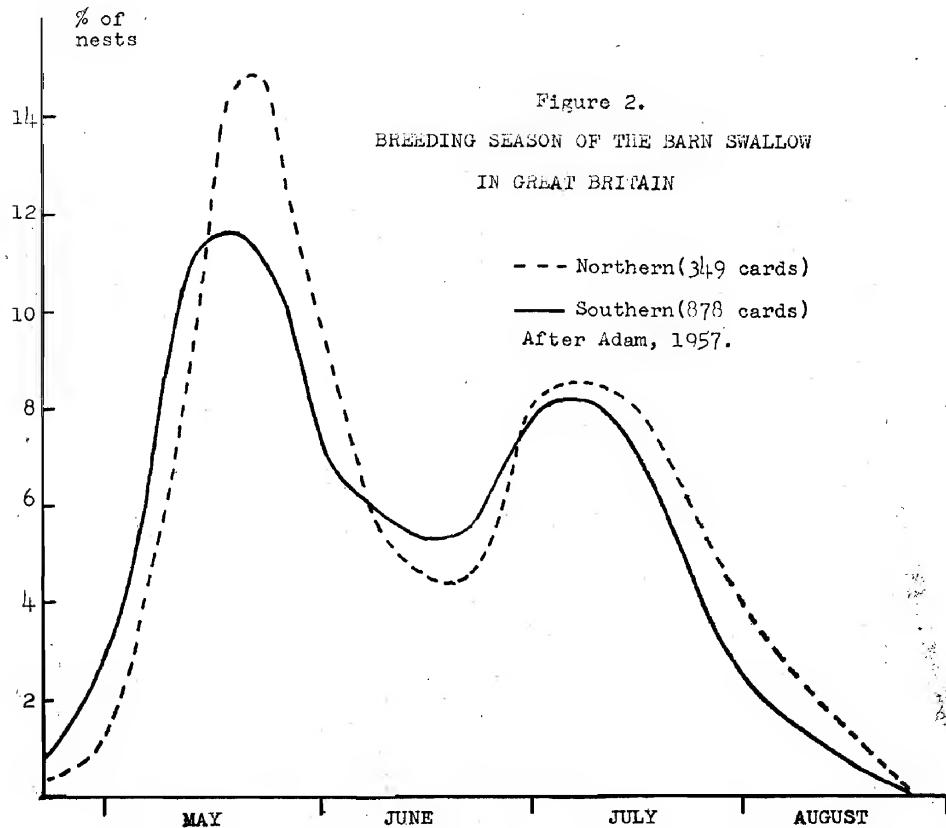
In essence the scheme is very simple, as all good schemes should be. Each observer fills in a card recording the data noted for every active nest found. The form of the card is shown in figure one.

Figure 1.

Separate cards are used for each nest, but subsequent visits to the same nest are recorded on the same card. Several visits to the same nest increase the value of the card. The completed cards are sent, at intervals or at the end of the season, into the central agency. Here they are sorted and when enough cards are available they can be analysed.

The first piece of information that can be obtained is a picture of the breeding season. To illustrate this I have selected one of the few species common to both continents for which analysis is available. The breeding season of the Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) is shown in figure two. The Handbook of British Birds, a fine reference work, say

this about the breeding season of the Barn Swallow "from mid-May onwards, rarely earlier, to Sept-Oct". How much more informative is figure two.



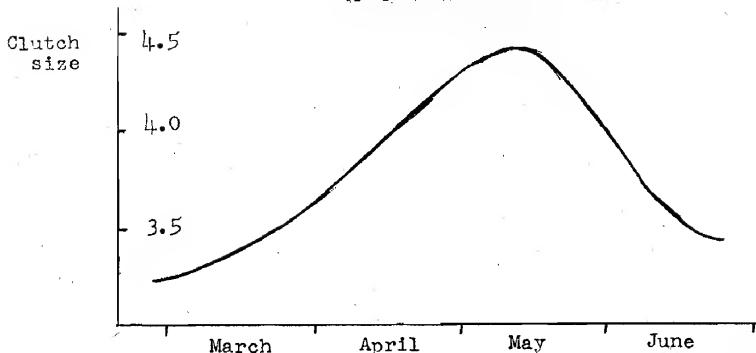
It is seen that the breeding season starts in late April and, in fact, is noticeably earlier than the sentence in the Handbook suggests. The data in figure two is analysed separately for northern and southern England. It will be seen that the first peak is about a week later in the north. The second peak is less sharply defined than the first and this is probably due to a combination of second and third broods.

For very common species it is possible to plot the breeding season for each year and thus determine the influence of climate on the breeding season.

Another facet of breeding biology that can be examined is clutch-size. The variation of clutch-size with breeding season for the Blackbird (*Turdus merula*) is shown in figure three. The species referred to here is not the Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) but a true thrush, the European counterpart of the American Robin (*T. migratorius*).

Figure 3.

SEASONAL VARIATION OF CLUTCH SIZE  
OF THE BLACKBIRD



Based on 1904 cards  
Snow 1955

Referring to the Blackbird, the Handbook of British Birds states "4-5, often 3, rarely 6", again much more information can be obtained from nest record cards. It should be mentioned that the variation of clutch-size with season of the Blackbird is larger than found in many other species. In the closely related Song Thrush (*T. ericetorum*) the variation is much less. Nevertheless, this pattern of clutch-size with breeding season is found in many species.

The breeding success can be calculated from the cards. The relationship of breeding success to the breeding season and clutch-size has been considered. However, one of the greatest values of the scheme might be in the much disputed field of the effects of insecticides. Much has been talked about the lack of breeding success due to insecticides, but with nest record cards we should be able to compare areas treated with insecticides with untreated areas. Hard facts would replace speculation.

Details of the methods of analysing data from cards are not given here, since they are not considered to be of general interest. Also references are not given since these are entirely found in British journals which are not readily available here. However, details of methods of extracting data and list of references can be obtained from the author.

Having, I hope, given some idea of the value of this scheme in the collection of ornithological information I would like to outline plans that have been made for starting such a scheme here. The idea is that the scheme is to be based on the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University. I am sure that no more suitable place could have been found. I am grateful to the director, Dr. Sewall Pettingill, for making this possible, to Dr. Sally Hoyt the executive secretary for her enthusiastic support and to the executive committee of the Onondaga Audubon Society for underwriting the cost of starting the scheme.

A stock of cards has been printed and these may be obtained free from the Laboratory of Ornithology, Sapsucker Woods, Cornell University, Ithaca. At the end of the season completed cards are sent to the Laboratory of Ornithology. The success of this scheme depends on wide-spread support and it is hoped that even those who find only a single nest will help by recording it.

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## CONSERVATION NEWS

By MAXWELL C. WHEAT, JR.

"I think the insecticides situation is far worse than we realized."

This was the plainness and bluntness of the statement made by Roger Tory Peterson in his talk to Federation members and guests at the annual meeting.

The famous ornithologist, whose guidebook nearly every birder has stuffed into a pocket when in the field, reiterated his concern several times as he pointed to diminishing populations of species and elaborated on incidences of unhatched eggs. He warned that "The Osprey and Bald Eagle may be gone from the east coast in ten years."

"Heaven knows how much DDT we have in our own systems," he declared, citing the findings reported by Rachel Carson in her book "Silent Spring."

Remarking that bird watchers by tradition have always been a little ahead of everybody else in such matters, he said that "it is up to us to combat the expensive campaign the chemical companies are putting on — one company giving a quarter of a million dollars to fight Rachel Carson."

Dr. Peterson suggested that the Federation clubs and members could make a real contribution by taking breeding bird censuses. To prove a point, he said, you can't simply say that the Robins in a locality have suffered. You have to have measurable facts, like the censuses of areas which can be compared from year to year.

"For instance, I would like to see more careful counts of heronries," he said. "Some of the chemicals may be showing up in herons. First, we've got to know if there are fewer Great Blue Herons nesting in New York State."

"I would like to see more careful counts of birds of prey." He alluded to the apparent disappearance of the breeding Peregrine Falcon around New York City. Saying there were once perhaps a dozen eyries within an hour of the city, he said that in 1955 "we noticed the eggs were not hatching."

Actually, Dr. Peterson's call for more breeding bird censuses was anticipated earlier in the convention when Dr. Stephen Eaton of St. Bonaventure University and chairman of the Publications and Research Committee, made the same plea in his report to the delegates attending the Council meeting.

It is significant how far reaching can be the consequences of efforts in which bird watchers have taken the lead. For instance, 20 years ago no one hardly thought that a fight to save song birds was more than just that. But today, in trying to save song birds from the effects of spraying, we may actually be helping to save human beings themselves from health problems caused by these poisons.

Bird watchers are trying to save 10,000 acres of salt wetlands on the south shore of Long Island, which are vital for the breeding, feeding and

resting of birds following their age-old paths of the Atlantic Flyway. But in passing a resolution urging the Board of Supervisors of the Town of Hempstead to preserve these wetlands, the Federation noted that they were important for more than the maintenance of critically depleted waterfowl.

The resolution also read that the wetlands "provide the nutrients that support the production and nuture of fish and shellfish essential for the metropolitan area's fishing and are vital for the maintenance of the Long Island water table."

It was with similar motivation — multi-motivations — that the Council endorsed the idea of establishing a national seashore on the barrier beach of Fire Island fronting the Atlantic Ocean off Long Island. The resolution, urging passage of H.R. 3693 by Rep. John Lindsey "To establish the Fire Island National Seashore" read in part as follows:

"We feel it represents an excellent opportunity to have within the borders of New York State a park operated by the National Park Service, offering, in the tradition of that Service, as much access as possible for enjoying camping, hiking, fishing, wildlife study and other outdoor activities."

It is important that clubs and members write urging their respective congressmen to support this legislation — to let the lawmakers know that people from throughout the state want a national seashore on Long Island. It should be reported that Senators Kenneth Keating and Jacob Javitts have both sponsored legislation calling for a national seashore on that strip.

The New York Forest Preserve, another area having multi-fold importance for the public, including that of water supply, is the subject of a proposed new policy announced recently by Assemblyman Watson Pomeroy, chairman of the Joint Legislative Committee on Natural Resources.

It is similar to the one he unsuccessfully advocated two years ago. The new plan would encourage foot trails, lean-tos and public campsites in the so-called non-wilderness areas, according to the announcement. Mr. Pomeroy also maintained that the "forever wild" concept would remain the fundamental policy.

As bird watchers, we have found ourselves in the forefront of an effort that actually has the effect of rescuing man from the terrible consequences of his own ignorance-blessed foolishness in tampering with the delicate balance of nature — whether it be playing around with sprays or "salvaging" marshes or swamps. The individual who hardly knows what a Blue Jay looks like might benefit greatly from the fight a local bird club launches to save the nesting grounds of some ducks or to save some songbirds from poisons. A generation ago, even bird watchers might have been surprised by the far-reaching consequences of their conservation work.

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\* Omissions should be called to the attention of the Bibliography committee: Sally F. Hoyt, Chairman, John B. Belknop, Allen H. Benton, & Kenneth C. Parkes.

## FIELD NOTES

**Tree Swallow Roost in Orient, Long Island. With Notes on Their Habits Thereto:**  
The tree swallow roost was first discovered on October 4, 1908. It was a clear typical October afternoon with a light easterly breeze coming over the sea. I was enjoying a late afternoon stroll when my attention was arrested by an enormous gathering of swallows that had collected high above a certain woodlot. I noticed immediately that the many thousands of swallows that filled the air in the vicinity had arrived at this one locality and were maneuvering strangely at an extraordinary height.

They were first observed shortly after sunset and a faint gloom dimmed the air. The birds were exceedingly high and their movements most interesting. The great flock would huddle in a compact bunch, then rapidly spread out into an extensive loose flock. Then, with surprising quickness they would dash together again into a swarming mass. These drill-like maneuvers were repeated time after time as the flock gradually rose upward. Once again the great flock expanded far out and up. They turned, and the entire assemblage rushed to a dense center, where they hovered briefly; then like a huge serpent uncoiling, a narrow column of birds poured downward from one edge of the great flock and with a rushing roar went whirling and twisting with meteorlike speed earthward. The column did not exceed ten feet in diameter, yet thousands upon thousands of swallows poured downward in less than two minutes' time. Approximately two-thirds of the entire flock went down in that first grand descension. The swallows that remained up continued their interesting antics about five minutes longer before descending in like manner, a few of the last remaining up until it was too dusky to distinguish them by sight. It was my first observation of the kind, a spectacular sight to witness and one never to be forgotten. The rushing sound from the many small wings was equal to that of an express train approaching from the opposite side of the woods. I was elated that I had located a swallow roost. Looking westward toward the bright afterglow I could see myriads of swallows streaming through the treetops seeking roosting perches for the night. The noise from the thousands of fluttering wings was likened to the surf on a distant shore and lasted well into the darkness before all became composed. After all the birds had settled down and become quiet for the night, I shook a tree and the commotion that followed the disturbance was startling. Every tree evidently was full of roosting swallows.

The roost consisted of a twenty acre tract of second-growth mixed hardwood trees, fifteen to thirty feet in height, of oak, hickory, sassafras, maple and cherry. Low level farms spread out on the west and north of the roost and salt marshes with salt tidal creeks on east and south.

The following evening I was at the roost before the swallows arrived to study their behavior in full. The western sky that evening was deeply roseate tinted and the column of descending birds was beautiful, as were the vast numbers of swallows moving northward through the woods after their descent against the bright western sky. On both nights the swallows came down in the south section of the woodlot and moved northward seeking perching supports. It was light enough the second night, from the glow of the western sky, to observe the swallows as they perched tightly together along the branches to the very tips which were sagging under the weight. Many birds could be detected seeking perches and even trying to cling to leaves. A low contented twitting was the only note heard and this slowly subdued into silence as the evening progressed.

The third day had been warm with a light easterly breeze, and the tree swallows flight over the farm was the heaviest of the season as the birds drifted along westward toward the roost.

Just east of the roost in the south edge of a marshy pasture was a small fresh water pond where the swallows would drink and bathe every afternoon enroute to the roost, refreshing themselves for the night rest. They swirled around this pond with open bills, the lower bill skimming the surface in drinking and dip and drag their bodies through the water to bathe, fluffing their plumage as they arose to renew the act. Often more than a hundred birds struck the water at a time. This continued for over an hour each evening as the flocks approached the roost. The marshy pasture surroundings of the pond was the habitat of flies, mosquitoes and other insect food for the swallows. Conditions were perfect for them to retire contentedly for the night, refreshed with food and drink.

The third evening at the roost the flock was indescribably immense, such magnitude could not be estimated in numbers. The topmost birds were so high that they appeared as pepper dots against the sky. How they could come down at such terrific speed without injury is unbelievable, together with the suddenness of the descent from a solid packed flock at great height, one edge of the flock unraveling downward until the whole flock had disappeared into the foliage.

In the morning I ventured to the woodlot to get an understanding of the departure of the swallows from the roost. This was extremely enlightening in comparison to their retirement the previous evening. Soon after dawn the swallows began to leave the roost in small numbers. At first, in periods of several minutes. Only one, two or three swallows left together. This soon grew to 50 in a group and increased rapidly, the last half of the total going out in a steady stream. All the swallows came out on the east side of the woods and flew high toward the east. None of them stopped to feed or remained on the mainland of Orient after leaving the roost. They flew east over Gardiner's bay to the outlying islands to feed and retrace their flight.

The shore line is two miles east of the roost and the off-shore islands ten miles distant. Here the swallows spent most of the mornings feeding and trending back with their erratic flight, resting as they progressed. They frequently rested by perching on the bare plowed farmland like a great blue mat, sometimes covering an acre of ground. Forerunners of the flight began to reappear around noon in Orient with the peak of their abundance arriving between four and six in the afternoon. Many of them reached the pond by mid-afternoon.

A series of mornings showed a variation in the manner of departure from the roost. On the morning of October 7, following the evening when the great numbers could not be estimated when the swallows went to roost, an estimation could be reckoned by the division of the flock into smaller groups the next morning as they left the roost. The first two flocks that departed were estimated at 10,000 birds each with the succeeding flocks thereafter decreasing in numbers. The total became 75,000 birds that morning. Probably there were 100,000 or more swallows in the roost that night. All the birds from the roost that morning flew high toward the east, as on the proceeding mornings. Immediately after the last swallows had departed, an immense flock of cowbirds and grackles vacated the roost, the number of cowbirds estimated at 2,000 individuals.

On October 18 the number of swallows was estimated at 25,000 individuals. This was a remarkable number for the lateness of the season, considering that the 20th of October is the average date for the last record of this series, but the proceed-

ing two days had temperature registering above 80 degrees. The next morning a marked change took place at the roost. The first three flocks of swallows, of a thousand or more birds each, left the roost close together, and, instead of going eastward as usual, they circled round and round high above the roost, ascending higher and higher until they faded from vision even with binoculars. The several flocks that followed acted in a like manner, but could be discerned barely visible at a great height and then they disappeared in a southerly direction. This was the direction the first larger flocks seemed to be trending. Only a few later individuals flew off toward the usual easterly direction as heretofore. Later that day only the few, that had gone east in the morning, returned to the roost over the usual route.

Could this be the secret of the swallows' southward migration — to ascend from the roost at dawn to an invisible height and to strike out for a southern destination? I had considered them feeding preceding a flight south; in this case, it does not appear so. Perhaps their southerly flight would not take them a much greater distance than their morning trek eastward from the roost. At least these flocks did not appear again at the roost where they had been for so long a period.

On the morning of the last great flight of swallows at the roost, small hawks as the sharp-shinned, Coopers and pigeon were common around the roost and every hawk observed had a swallow; and they were seen to pick a swallow off at will. The hawks were feasting morning and evening on swallows so easily obtainable.

As to the present, we never get the big flights of Tree Swallows in late years and they never spread out to rest on the plowed land as they did in my young days. Also, we never see them mixed with Martins in large flocks (The Martins used to perch on the ground with them in August). Fifty years ago the Martins would string out on the telephone wires as far as the eye could reach for a quarter of a mile, and more, in a long dark row. For years we have not seen a Martin in the fall migration.

Roy Latham, Orient, Long Island

**Evening Grosbeak Feeding Young in Dutchess County in July 1962:** On May 9th I recorded 20 Evening Grosbeaks feeding at the window feeder of my home, three miles north of Standfordville, Dutchess County. This was the last record for the season until May 20th when I discovered one male and one female on the gravel driveway under a Silver Maple tree.

This pair of Evening Grosbeaks was seen again on May 26th. On May 31st I noted a male eating sunflower seeds. We did not see him again until June 17th when he was back at the feeder eating sunflower seeds again. Next we saw the female feeding at this same feeder again on June 25th, 28th, and 30th.

We especially noticed how green their beaks were during this season, as we had never seen them except with the yellow beaks of winter. When the female returned on the 4th of July with a somewhat fuzzy, black-beaked replica of herself, we were sure they had nested near us and had raised at least this one young.

On July 7th several members of The Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club saw the female with this one young. We went on vacation shortly hereafter and did not see them again.

Mrs. Paul Haight, Standfordville

**King Rail at Belmont, Allegany County:** Early in December 1962 my wife reported a strange bird which had flushed a short distance from her and disappeared in marsh grasses (cattails and canary grass). I thought at first it might be either a Woodcock or a Common Snipe. Several days went by and then she noted the bird feeding about a stump, again in the creek bottom. This creek passes through the village of Belmont and enters the Genesee River just above the Belmont Dam. Using field glasses, we knew it to be neither a woodcock nor a snipe and after checking in **Birds of North America**, we thought it might be a King Rail (*Rallus elegans*). Both Dr. Sally Hoyt and Dr. Stephen Eaton, to whom we wrote, confirmed our identification from the description.

At the suggestion of Dr. Hoyt, we scattered mixed grain along the creek bottom and began daily checks and observations of the bird. Arriving home from work about 3:00 P. M., we would walk to the creek area. At first the bird was very wary and would quietly hide in swale and brush. Only on three occasions did the bird flush and then only for a short distances of 10 to 15 yards. It would fly not more

than 15 to 20 feet in height, with the legs dangling, and with a rather awkward flight. It gave at these times a short cackle and would drop to the creek and then disappear. Although we knew its approximate location and even tried to come up on it, we were unable to flush it a second time.

Early in January we enlisted the aid of two other observers, Kate Palmer and Dorothy Baker, both amateur ornithologists, both of whom were familiar with the Virginia Rail from previous observations. They, both, observed this bird feeding and then disappear from sight. My wife and I, on two separate occasions, approached within ten feet of the bird. It was wary but apparently not near as afraid as on prior occasions. It fed downstream through the open water, wading a few steps at a time, evidently feeding on vegetation and water insects as well as scattered grain. Throughout this entire period of time the Genesee River was completely frozen over and only an area of about 150 yards of our stream was not frozen. On occasions, the bird crossed both snow and ice, leaving tracks that we noted were larger than those of a hen pheasant.

Dr. Eaton planned to visit us on January 25, but a blizzard developed and temperatures dropped to 20 degrees below zero, so he did not come. We advised him we would let him know when conditions were favorable again for observation.

The weather worsened. On February 14 a neighbor reported having seen the bird in flight as it traveled some 100 yards or more. On checking we found tracks a considerable distance upstream from where it had been feeding. On going downstream we found tracks appearing through drifted snow from a hole about four inches in diameter, and one could see the mark of wing feathers in the snow. The tracks led to open water and then disappeared. This was the last date that we can presume the bird to have been alive.

On February 19 we had a quick thaw and temperatures rose to 40 degrees. The entire creek drifted over on February 16, 17 and 18. As my wife walked the creek on February 19, she found the King Rail lying dead in what had been its sheltered area under the overhanging snow. The snow had collapsed from sheer weight and the rail was apparently suffocated. The bird was sent to Dr. Stephen W. Eaton at St. Bonaventure University, who reported that it had a full digestive tract containing water plants and animal life. The specimen is now in the permanent collection of that University.

Lou L. Burton, John Street, Belmont

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### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WINTER SEASON DECEMBER 1 - MARCH 31 DAVID B. PEAKALL

The winter was extremely severe throughout the most of the state, prolonged cold was general and there were record snowfalls in some areas. In the northern part of the state there was virtual standstill in activity due to snow. Frank Clinch remarks that "roads became canyons too narrow for parking and often too deep to see even the tops of trees a hundred yards away."

For most of the winter it was extremely poor for winter finches; then in February a large invasion of Purple Finches occurred. This movement effected the entire state, but it was much less marked on Long Island. A wider canvas is necessary to determine the origin of this movement, although the flight was later in the lower Hudson valley than elsewhere. Associated with this invasion was a moderate flight of Pine Siskins and in some areas small to moderate numbers of Evening Grosbeaks.

The Hawk-Owl is a species that rarely invades our area. During the winter nine individuals were reported from six regions, mainly from the more northern areas. It is difficult to compare this invasion with those of many

years ago but I have not been able to find any evidence to suggest that the invasions of 1894-5 and 1922-3 were as large as that of this winter.

The Mourning Dove has been steadily increasing as a wintering species and several regions reported high counts despite the weather. The average number of Mourning Doves per Christmas count for those counts which have been carried out annually are given below. They are averaged in four year periods.

	1958-61	1954-57	1950-53	1946-49
Long Island (3 counts)	118	62	45	6
Rest of state (11 counts)	31	16	6	5

In 1946-7, 63 Mourning Doves were recorded on 26 counts and in 1961-62, 2560 on 41 counts; even allowing for increased numbers of observers this represents a very considerable increase.

The rarest bird seen was a Green-tailed Towhee which spent the winter at a feeder in Ithaca. This is the first record for the state, although there have been a number of records for the eastern United States. The bird was seen by hundreds of observers and was well photographed. I hope that the absence of a specimen does not preclude it from the state list. It is difficult to see how collecting it would add to the definitive status of this record. Other rarities included a Varied Thrush at Tarrytown and Lesser Black-backed Gull on the lower Hudson.

The Blue Grosbeaks reported from the Catskills in the last issue were observed there in December and February. The species is most unusual in the area even in summer but in the winter it is not normally present anywhere in the United States. Another unusual winter record was a party of Indigo Buntings in Dutchess county in December.

Three Fulvous Tree-ducks were shot from a flock of six or eight of this species on Long Island. An interesting but not totally unexpected record in view of recent dramatic changes in the late autumnal dispersal of this species (Baird, Audubon Field Notes 17:6-8, 1963). On the other hand the few records of the Chestnut-collared Longspur for the state are old, but one was observed in a flock of Lapland Longspurs in region eight.

To finish on a more spring-like note, there was a good flight of Whistling Swans in the western part of the state. The flight of Canada Geese was excellent in the western and central parts of the state, numbers in the major concentration areas at the end of March totalled nearly two hundred thousand. Associated with this flight were a larger number of Blue Geese than are normally reported. A Barnacle Goose was seen in region one.

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## REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

RICHARD C. ROSCHE

The region was under the influence of some of the most severe winter weather conditions of the century. While December began with a series of days likened to "Indian summer", winter moved in during the second week and stayed without loosening its grip until mid-March.

December, January and February were all characterized by having lower temperatures than average; while snow depths during the period were generally greater than in most winters, especially in areas to the south and east of Buffalo, the total amount of precipitation for the three months was also below average. The first major snowstorm occurred during the second week of December; unforgettable blizzards occurred on January 14 and 23-24; the usual January thaw did not materialize; it was the coldest February since 1936.

The severity of this winter caused a marked contrast in bird-life compared with the preceding two winter seasons. Many of the half-hardy species moved out in late November as if in anticipation of a rough winter. The numbers and occurrence of many of the icterids, some of the sparrows and others, were notably lower than was the case during 1960-61 and 1961-62. Early and persistent ice formations on all parts of the Niagara River caused a general dispersal of wintering waterfowl and gulls into other areas where they usually do not congregate in such numbers (see below). Mid-winter saw all of the Lower Niagara River jammed with ice and up to three-fourths of the Upper River ice bound at times. Lake Erie became almost 100% ice covered except for small areas. Nevertheless, Dunkirk Harbor remained open in parts and produced its usual variety of wintering waterfowl.

Landbirds in general, especially in late January and February appeared to be fewer than in the average winter. Many feeding station reporters remarked that they were feeding lower numbers of birds than in the preceding two years. Reports of dead birds, especially House Sparrows, were much more frequent this winter than ever before. That the severe weather took its toll of small landbirds appears rather evident.

All birds of prey were generally more scarce than in most winters, perhaps due to the deep snow cover and low population of small rodents (see below under Sparrow Hawk). Good feeding conditions in the north apparently induced winter finches to remain there, with only a minor movement occurring in this region in late February and March (see below).

March was almost five degrees warmer than usual; precipitation again was below normal. Winter continued through the first week but then was followed by mild conditions that persisted through the end of the month. While early migrants began appearing during the second week, the first major movement of typical March migrants, i.e. swans and geese, hawks, killdeer, icterids, song sparrows, etc., developed on March 16-17. This was a general movement throughout the region. Conditions conducive to good movement from the south were not generally favorable again until March 24 when a mass movement was evident through and into the region. The last week produced many reports of first arrivals such as greater yellowlegs, tree swallow, phoebe, savannah, vesper and field sparrows and towhee.

Highlights of the season include: Barnacle Goose, King Rail, Laughing Gull, Hawk-Owl and Northern Three-toed Woodpecker.

Abbreviations used below are as follows: Alleg. SP — Allegany State Park; BAS — Buffalo Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count; BOS — Buffalo Ornithological Society Christmas Bird Count; Chaut. L — Chautauqua Lake; Forest Lawn — Forest Lawn Cemetery, Buffalo; imm. — immature; ISP — Island State Park; JAS — Jamestown Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count; Nia. R. — Niagara River; OCC — Olean Christmas Bird Count; OOGMA — Oak Orchard Game Management Area; OO — Wolcottsv. — Oak Orchard - Wolcottsville region; Squaw Island — Squaw Island dump area, Buffalo; T. — Town of; WW — Winter Waterfowl Count.

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Emerson; AF—Arthur Freitag; HF—Harold Freund; DGG—David G. Greene; JG—Joe Grzybowski; GG—Gerald Guenther; FTH—Fred T. Hall; EH—Mrs. Ethel Hartloff; BH—B. Hochmuth; WHK—Walter and Harriette Klabunde; WL—Walter Listman; WAM—Willard and Alice McKale; HDM—Harold D. Mitchell; CM—Carl Mrozek; BN—Bernard Nathan; EP—Elizabeth Pillsbury; FR—Frances Rathbun; FMR—Frances M. Rew; RCR—Richard C. Rosche; AS—Arthur Schaffner; ELS—Edward L. Seeber; GMS—George M. Smith; WAS—William A. Smith; WFS—Willard F. Stanley; JFT—Joseph F. Thill; EAU—Edward and Alice Ulrich; HBV—Henning and Beulah von Arnim; GGW—Gertrude G. Webster.

**Loons — Ducks:** Red-necked Grebe: one, Jan 22 (LB, NB) through Mar 24 (EP), Dunkirk Harbor — apparently wintered; early spring migrants are indicated by single birds found grounded in the snow Feb 21 or 22 at Holland (GG rep RCR) and Feb. 28 at Lancaster (BH rep HHA) — most of Lake Erie and other waters 100% frozen at this time. Horned Grebe: one with injured wing, picked up Dec. 31 near Curriers, Wyo. Co. — extremely late inland record (RCR et al); few wintered with two Jan 29 at Dunkirk Harbor (LB, NB), the only reports. Pied-billed Grebe: one remained on the Nia. R. near Niagara Falls until Jan 6 (BN et al); another was noted in the Olean area in late Dec (SWE); March migrants were rather scarce, the first not being reported until late in the month. Double-crested Cormorant: one imm., Dec 23, Nia. R. off Beaver ISP (KPA et al) — always uncommon in the region. Great Blue Heron: none reported after late Dec — none apparently wintered; March migrants generally more scarce than in the average year with Mar 24-26 being peak period of movement through area. Black-crowned Night Heron: one, Dec 16 (RCR et al), one Dec 23 (KPA et al) and two, Jan 5 (FMR et al) at Beaver ISP — all immatures. American Bittern: one, Mar 30, near Lyndonville (WAS, GMS) — unusually early. Whistling Swan: 35, Dec 1, Chaut. L. (EP et al) — fall migrants; one occurred Jan 26 (FMR) through Mar 10 (KPA et al) at Dunkirk Harbor; the March flight was the largest in the memory of many local observers throughout the region. Peak periods of movement occurred about Mar 16 and Mar 24-27; maximum count of 414, Mar 27 on the "sinks" near Wolcottsv. (AS et al). Perhaps ice conditions on Lake Erie, 100 miles to the west of Buffalo where large numbers usually congregate at this time of the year, prevented the swans from doing so this year and caused them to disperse eastward into less favorable feeding areas in smaller groups. Canada Goose: two flocks totaling about 155 birds, Dec 30, over the Hamburg area (HDM, HC et al) — extremely late migrants; one rather small individual wintered with the dabbling ducks at Buckhorn ISP (RCR et al); first spring movement occurred Mar 16 when several flocks were reported migrating overhead; maximum count, about 35,000, Mar. 31 in the OO - Wolcottsv. (KPA et al). **Barnacle Goose:** one, Mar 31, on the "sinks" near Wolcottsv. with Canada Geese (RCR et al) — light sides, grayish back, white forehead, dark lores, black breast all carefully seen — fifth record for the region. Snow Goose: one, Mar 20-31, on the "sinks" near Wolcottsv. (many observers). Blue Goose: 17, Mar 25 on the "sinks" Wolcottsv. (WL rep AS) — unusually high count. Mallard and Black Duck: 778 and 1922 respectively, Dec 23, Nia. R. area (BOS) — highest counts in 34 years. Gadwall: three, Dec. 16, Beaver ISP (KPA et al); two, Dec 26, Nia. R. opposite Beaver ISP (KPA et al); one, Jan 13, Nia. F. (RCR et al) — only reports. Pintail: 15, Jan 13, Nia. R. area (WW) — higher than average number. Green-winged Teal: one-two, all winter, Forest Lawn (AF et al) — second consecutive season to be found here; one, Dec 19, Beaver ISP (AS); one, Mar 2 and 9, T. Clarence, Erie Co. (CM, JG) — probably an early migrant. Blue-winged Teal: one, Dec 2, Buckhorn ISP (RCR, KPA) — second Dec record for region; two, Mar 9-10, T. Clarence, Erie Co. (CM, JG) — rather early migrants. American Widgeon: 275, Dec. 1, Chaut. L. (EP et al); 52, Dec 23, Nia. R. area (BOS) — highest count in 34 years. Shoveler: one, Mar 24, Dunkirk Harbor (WWB) — few reports from this area. Redhead: very scarce during Dec and early Jan; 78, Jan 13 in Nia. R. area (WW) — second highest count in nine years; more numerous during Feb and Mar than in recent years with maximum count of 156, Mar 13 at Dunkirk Harbor (AS et al). Ring-necked Duck: one, Dec 16, Buckhorn ISP (KPA et al); one, Dec 23, Beaver ISP (KPA et al); one, Upper Nia. R., Jan 13 (RCR et al). Canvasback: maximum count of about 8,000 Dec. 19, Nia. R. at Beaver ISP and Buckhorn ISP (AS); 7,088, Dec 23, Nia. R. area (BOS); 3,644, Jan 13 (WW) — numbers of wintering birds way down over previous

years on Nia. R. Greater Scaup: two, Feb 10, Alleg. SP (GGW) — rare in winter in this locality. Common Goldeneye: 2,717, Dec 23, Nia. R. (BOS) — lower than usual number; five, Feb 20, Conewango Creek near Balcom (AS) — winter reports from inland areas such as this are rare. Flocks of over 100 Goldeneyes, Common Mergansers and a few Buffleheads wintered on the Genesee River between Belmont and Scio (LLB). King Eider: one (basic plumage), Dec 23 and Jan 13, Upper Nia. R. (RCR et al). Ruddy Duck: four, Dec. 19, Beaver ISP (AS); one, Dec 23, Beaver ISP (FMR et al). Hooded Merganser: more common during Dec. on Nia. R. than usual with maximum count of 15 on the Lower River and 19 at Buckhorn ISP, Dec. 8 (KPA et al); only three reports of single birds for Jan through Mar — fewer wintering individuals than usual. Common Merganser: 6,636, Dec. 23, Nia. R. (BOS) — highest count in 34 years. Red-breasted Merganser: unusually low wintering numbers; 91, Jan 13 (WW) — lowest count in nine years.

**Hawks — Owls:** March hawk flights over south shore of L. Erie: Mar 14 (KPA et al); Goshawk-1, Cooper's 2, Red-tailed-49, Red-shouldered-7, Rough-legged-1, (total 60); Mar 15 (KPA et al): Sharp-shinned-1, Red-tailed-19, Rough-legged 2 (total 22); Mar 16 (KPA et al): Sharp-shinned-3, Cooper's-1, Red-tailed-77, Red-shouldered-47, Rough-legged-7, Marsh-1, Sparrow-8 (total 143); Mar 17 (KPA et al): Sharp-shinned-2, Cooper's-2, Red-tailed-41, Red-shouldered-28, Rough-legged-1, Marsh-1 (total 75); Mar 24 (FMR et al): Turkey Vulture-2, Sharp-shinned-2, Red-tailed-23, Red-shouldered-59 (total 86); Mar 26 (RCR): Turkey Vulture-20. Sharp-shinned Hawk: one, Feb 14 and 18, Hamburg (TLB) — rare in winter. Cooper's Hawk: slight increase in frequency of reports during Feb and early Mar in urban areas and near feeding stations coinciding with period of deepest snow cover. Red-shouldered Hawk: Unlike the preceding two winters, when a number of these raptors were reported, especially from areas along the south shore of Lake Erie, only one was reported this year between the time one would expect a late migrant and early Mar; one was reported Dec 31 in the Jamestown area (JAS); 21 and 12, Mar 24 and 26 respectively, over Lyndonville, Orleans Co. (WAS, GMS). Rough-legged Hawk: scattered individuals reported throughout the period with no notable winter concentrations — a poor winter for this bird. Bald Eagle: an unprecedented number of reports compared with recent years involving six-seven individuals as follows: one imm., Jan 13, Grand Island (EAU et al) — probably this same bird was observed in the Grand Island-Navy Island (a pair formerly nested on the latter) area Jan 30 (AS), Feb 24 (FMR et al) and Mar 24 (RFA); two imms. were noted in this area Mar 5 (JFT). One Imm., Feb 12, over Gerry, Chaut. Co. (CGW); one adult feeding on deer carcass, Feb. 26, Zoar Valley, Catt. Co. (FTH et al); one adult, Feb 28, Dunkirk Harbor (rep WFS); one adult, Mar 9, over T. Hamburg (WWB); one imm., Mar 24, over Hamburg (RFA); one imm., Mar 30, OOGMA (MLE et al). Sparrow Hawk: "During Jan the Buffalo Museum of Science received more telephone calls regarding Sparrow Hawks in the vicinity of feeding stations about metropolitan Buffalo than during the entire preceding 15 year period. At the same time Mr. and Mrs. Walter Klabunde reported an unusual dearth of these falcons on the Lake Ontario Plain, where there are ordinarily a considerable number of them. It could be that the prevalent low ebb in the meadow mouse cycle plus the deep snow have mostly eliminated the ready availability of mice and have driven many of the Sparrow Hawks to the congregating places of House Sparrows and other small birds. Many of the hawks were observed to have captured House Sparrows at feeding stations" (HHA). Ring-necked Pheasant: 431, Dec 30, Hamburg-East Aurora area (BAS) — highest count in 17 years; poor feeding conditions due to the deep snow resulted in unusually large numbers occurring at feeding stations. Chukar: one, Dec 21, Olcott, Nia. Co. (RCR) — in area where some 400 birds had been released earlier in 1962 — we still do not know if this bird is becoming established in the region even though it has been known to nest under natural conditions and occasionally an individual is observed or heard. Turkey: seven feeding in corn stubble, Jan 17, Meservey Hill, T. Alma, Alleg. Co. (LLB); 30, Jan 17, Fords Brook Road, T. Alma (LLB) — we seldom hear of high counts like this in the region. **King Rail:** one, early Dec-Feb 19, Belmont, Alleg. Co. (LLB) — see note in "Field Notes" Section. American Coot: 500, Dec 1, Chaut. L. (EP et al); no reports after Dec 25 — apparently none wintered. Killdeer: one, Dec 23, Grand Island (EAU et al); one, Dec 31, Jamestown area (JAS); no other reports until spring migrants arrived.

Common Snipe: no winter reports. Glaucous Gull: rather scarce in Nia. R., maximum numbers of three-four occurring from late Dec to mid Feb at Squaw Island (RFA et al); two, Jan 22, Dunkirk Harbor (LB, NB) — few reports from this locality. Iceland Gull: three, Jan 28, Squaw Island (AS) — maximum count. Iceland Gull (*L.g.glaucoides*): one, Mar 10, Dunkirk Harbor (KPA et al) — few reports from this locality. Iceland Gull (*L.g.kumlienii*): two, Jan 30 (RFA) and one, Feb 17 (KPA et al), Squaw Island. Great Black-backed Gull: far more common than usual all winter, ice conditions on the Niagara River and the Great Lakes causing, in all probability, two major concentrations: 40, Jan 28 (AS) and 52, Jan 30 (RFA), Squaw Island; 100, Feb 1 (LB, NB) and 75, Feb 12 (GGW), Dunkirk Harbor. One observer who has visited Dunkirk Harbor regularly for years stated that he "couldn't recall seeing more than 18 there at one time" (WFS). Herring Gull: 3,027, Dec 23, Nia. R. region (BOS) — lower than usual. Ring-billed Gull: 9,019, Dec 23, Nia. R. region (BOS) — highest count in 34 years. **Laughing Gull**: one adult in breeding plumage with Bonaparte's Gulls, Dec 1, Nia. R. at Lewiston (KPA, RCR). Bonaparte's Gull: 6000, Dec 1, Nia. F.-Lewiston area (KPA et al) — maximum count; numbers steadily decreased through Dec and early Jan with last one reported Jan 13 on Upper Nia. R., 400, Dec 3, Gowanda (WWB) — a noteworthy inland concentration, especially this late in the season. Little Gull: two-three adults, Dec 1-16, Nia. F.-Lewiston area of Nia. R. (KPA et al); two, Dec 23, Nia. F. (AD et al) — last report. Mourning Dove: about average number of wintering birds; 40, Jan 20, near Wilson (KPA et al) and 25, Jan 1, Millersport (RCR et al) — maximum counts. Barn Owl: two, Dec 30, Hamburg (EH) — only report. Great Horned Owl: several reports indicate that this bird now occurs where it has been absent in recent years in the metropolitan Buffalo area. **Hawk-Owl**: one, Dec 28, Millersport, Nia. Co. (KPA, CM et al) — this individual remained here through Feb 10 (WWB) and was studied by many interested persons; first record since 1945 and about the fourth record for the region. Long-eared Owl: scarce, continuing the trend of recent winters, with none reported from the usual winter concentration areas on the lake plains; one, Jan 24, Village of Allegany — brought to doorstep by cat Jan 25 (SWE); one, Feb 5, Eden, Erie Co. (TLB); one, Mar 30, Point Gratiot, Chaut. Co. (KPA et al). Short-eared Owl: numbers low compared with last two years with no major concentrations on the lake plains; ten and eight, Jan 3 and 26 respectively, Lancaster (CM) — maximum counts for period. Saw-whet Owl: one, Mar 31, Buffalo (DGG) — only report.

**Goatsuckers - Starling:** Yellow-shafted Flicker: more wintering birds than usual; five, Dec 30, Hamburg-East Aurora area (BAS) — highest count in 17 years; five, Feb 18, Portland, Chaut. Co. (LB, NB) — unusually high count for southern tier. Red-headed Woodpecker: one, Dec. 31, Jamestown area (JAS) — few winter reports from the southern tier; five, Jan 6, near Fort Niagara (WAM et al) — maximum count here — single birds reported from this area all winter; one, all winter visiting feeding station in Hamburg (AMB et al); one, Mar 16, Forest Lawn (AF). Hairy and Downy Woodpecker: 9 and 31 respectively, Dec. 29, Olean area (OCC) — highest counts in 14 years; about average elsewhere during winter. **Northern Three-toed Woodpecker**: one, Dec 16, Beaver ISP (HF) — this male remained here through Mar 3 (RCR et al) and was observed by most all interested local field observers; first record for the region. Blue Jay: more common than during the average winter with many more than usual visiting feeding stations; 172, Dec 29, Olean area (OCC) — highest count in 14 years. Common Crow: less common than usual during winter, especially in hilly southern tier areas. Tufted Titmouse: one, Dec 29, Olean area (OCC); eight, Dec 31, Jamestown area (JAS); one, Dunkirk, Feb 18 (LB, NB); several Mar records of single birds from usual areas along south shore of L. Erie. Red-breasted Nuthatch: relatively few wintered — scattered reports of one-two birds throughout region. Brown Creeper: less common than usual during winter. Winter Wren: one, Feb 18, Angola (TLB) — only report. Carolina Wren: no reports. Mockingbird: one, Feb 4, Lewiston (WHK) — only report. Catbird: one, Dec 30, at feeder in Orchard Park (rep AMB). Brown Thrasher: two, Dec. 30, at feeders in Orchard Park area (BAS). Robin: about average number of wintering birds. Eastern Bluebird: one, Mar 9, Derby (WWB) — first report; more reports during remainder of month than in past four-five years; seven, near Shadagee, Orleans Co., Mar 24 (WAS, GMS) — maximum count. Golden-crowned Kinglet: less common than during the average winter. Cedar Waxwing: about

average numbers through Feb; decided influx of birds during Mar which usually does not occur in most years; 138, Mar 15 and 383, Mar 16, migrating over T. Evans, Erie Co. (KPA et al) — many other reports throughout region especially in southern tier areas. Northern Shrike: a rather poor winter for this species with only scattered reports of single individuals; one, Jan 23-25, Belmont (LLB) and one, Feb 10, Alleg. SP (GGW et al) — noteworthy because of locality. Loggerhead Shrike: one, Mar 30, Belmont (LLB) — this species continues to become more scarce each year. Starling: less common during the winter than average especially south of Buffalo — 117, Dec 29, Olean area (OCC) — lowest count in 14 years; 321, Dec 30, Hamburg-East Aurora area (BAS) — lowest count in 17 years.

**Vireos - Warblers:** Myrtle Warbler: three, Dec 23, Grand Island (ELS et al); one, Jan 5, Batavia (GB); one, Jan 6, Fort Niagara (BN et al); six, Jan 7, bayberry area near Brocton, Chaut. Co. (LB, NB) — unusually high winter count.

**Blackbirds - Sparrows:** Wintering icterids were noticeably less common compared with the previous two years, both of which were preceded by unusually mild and prolonged fall seasons; the majority of reports of Red-winged Blackbirds, grackles and cowbirds came from feeding station operators, there being almost no reports of concentrations of any size anywhere. Rusty Blackbird: one, Dec 23, Buckhorn ISP (FMR et al); one singing, Feb 15 to at least Mar 12, St. Bonaventure Uni. campus near Olean (SWE). Common Grackle: one, Dec 29, Olean area (OCC); one, Dec 31, Jamestown area (JAS); 35, Jan 17-Feb 1, Meservay Hill Road, T. Alma, Alleg. Co. (LLB) — probably a record high number of wintering birds for the region; two, Jan 18-19, and seven, Feb 1, Belmont (LLB) — all wintering grackles in the southern tier counties are of special note in as much as few reports come to our attention. Cardinal: continues to appear to be very much on the increase throughout the region — 30, Dec 29, Olean area (OCC) — highest count in 14 years; 180, Dec 30, Hamburg-East Aurora area (BAS) — highest count in 17 years. Evening Grosbeak: no reports until one was noted Feb 25 at Hamburg (TLB); slight movement evident during Mar with maximum count of 19, Mar 11, Hamburg (HC). Purple Finch: "One of the largest mid-winter invasions of this species on record began to develop about the middle of February. The numbers of these birds increased rapidly until some persons reported as many as twenty or thirty at their feeding stations". These birds probably came from the north as an above average food supply began to dwindle in late winter (HHA). This same theory might explain the presence of a few Evening Grosbeaks and Redpolls concurrently with the Purple Finch increase. Common Redpoll: no reports until two and eight were noted Feb 19 and 20 respectively, Kenmore (FR); slight movement evident Mar 1-16 with maximum counts of 43, Mar 1, Grand Island (RCR et al) and 35, Mar 16, Java, Wyo. Co. (RCR). Pine Siskin: a few scattered reports of small numbers during Dec; no reports during Jan; Noticeable but small movement during Feb and Mar with maximum counts of 20-25, Feb 24, Youngstown (WHK) and 15, Mar 28, Hamburg (TLB). Crossbills: no reports. Rufous-sided Towhee: one, Dec 29, Olean (HBV); two, Dec 31, Jamestown area (JAS) — no other winter reports. Oregon Junco: one, Dec. 23, T. Tonawanda (RFA et al); two, Dec 30, Hamburg (at feeder) — these remained here through the end of the period (AMB et al). White-crowned Sparrow: fewer wintering birds compared with previous two years; one, Dec 30, Hamburg (AMB); one, Jan 22, Bear Lake, Chaut. Co. (LB, NB); one, Feb 10, Lewiston (WHK); two, Feb 24, Lockport (WHK). White-throated Sparrow: far fewer wintering birds compared with previous two years. Fox Sparrow: one, Jan 31-Feb 1, Hamburg (RA). Song Sparrow: about ten, all winter, Belmont (LLB) — we need to know more about the winter distribution of many common birds like this one. Snow Bunting: generally scarce during Dec and Jan; moderate movement during Feb and Mar with maximum counts of 1500, Mar 13, Sturgeon Point, Erie Co. (TLB) and 1100, Mar 24, Wethersfield, Wyo. Co. (RCR).

**Addenda:** Loggerhead Shrike: one, Nov 4 and 26, Derby (SB) — banded — rather late. Fox Sparrow: one, Dec 26, Busti, Chaut. Co. (EP).

48 Dartmouth Avenue, Buffalo 15, New York

## REGION 2 — GENESEE

HOWARD S. MILLER

Temperatures during the first three months of the period were consistently below normal, with February being the coldest in fifteen years. March, in contrast, was about 4° above normal, in fact, being the first month since last May to show above average temperatures. Snowfall was about average, but because of the continued cold weather the ground was snow covered much of the winter. Precipitation was below normal for the whole period, partly due to the low moisture content of the snow and partly to the almost total lack of rain.

A very heavy spring flight of Canada Geese was reported, and good hawk flights occurred on March 17 and 24. In spite of the cold winter, several half-hardy species appeared to have wintered successfully. Among the more outstanding birds recorded were: Snow Goose, Blue Goose, Harlequin Duck, Gashawk, Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker, Bohemian Waxwing, and Oregon Junco.

Names and initials of observers whose records appear regularly are: MSA — Morton S. Applebaum; JLB — John L. Brown; JWB — John W. Brown; CC — Christmas Census; JWC — J. Walter Corcoran; DRC — Dwight R. Chamberlain; GD — Mrs. Gertrude Davis; RTD — Robert T. Dobson; JF — John Faster; JH — Mrs. Jeanne Haller; CI — Carl Imm; AEK — Allen E. Kemnitzer; JK — Mr. & Mrs. John Kennedy; EL — Mrs. Edith Lank; WCL — Walter C. Listman; WL — Warren Lloyd; AM — Alfred Maley; RM — Miss Ruth MacRae; JM — Mr. & Mrs. Joseph McNett; EMM — Miss Elva M. Meyer; HSM — Howard S. Miller; LM — Mrs. Laura Moon; RTO — Richard T. O'Hara; RLR — Mr. & Mrs. Raymond L. Rohner; AS — Alfred Starling; MS — Mrs. Maryann Sunderlin; ST — Stephen Taylor; TET — Thomas E. Tetlow; WPW — Dr. W. Paul Weld; PHZ — Peter H. Zachmann; LMZ — Miss Louise M. Zeitler.

Names of places regularly used in the report: Brad. B. — Braddock's Bay; Con. L. — Conesus Lake; DEP — Durand-Eastman Park; e.Ls. — east lakeshore; Gen. R. — Genesee River; Iron. B. — Irondequoit Bay; L. Ont.-Lake Ontario; Man. — Manitou; MPP — Mendon Ponds Park; Sod. B. — Sodus Bay; Web. P. — Webster Park. sev. obs. — several observers; max. — maximum.

**Loons — Ducks:** Red-necked Grebe: two were on the e.Ls. Dec 23 (CC) and one at Man. Mar 13 (WCL). Harned Grebes: 35 on L. Ont. Dec 23 (CC) was a high winter count. A Pied-billed Grebe was on Iron. B. Dec 16 (AEK, WL). Great Blue Heron: one was at Con. L Dec 30 (WCL); one at Caledonia during all of Jan (McDonald et al); the species was generally distributed by the end of the period. Either a very early spring migrant or a wintering Am. Bittern was at Braddock's Mar 19 (LM). Whistling Swan: 45 at Brad. B. on Mar 25 (sev. obs.) and 34 at Groveland on Mar 30 (JF et al); these were the area's high count. Canada Geese: 28 at MPP Dec 2 (GM); the first six spring migrants appeared at Brad. B. Mar 9 (AM et al). There was a very heavy spring flight this year, with an estimated 100,000 birds passing through the area during the last ten days of Mar. A lone Brandt was at Brad. B. Dec 1 (AS et al). Two Snow Geese at Graveland Mar 30 (TET et al). Blue Goose: one in a small flock of Canada Geese was seen on L Ontario Mar 24 (HSM et al); 14 at Groveland Mar 30 (TET et al). Four Gadwell were at Web. P. Mar 17 (AEK, WL). The spring flight of Pintail seemed heavy with a max. count of 3,000 at Groveland Mar 30 (JF et al). Green-winged Teal was on Iron. B. Dec 23 (CC); the species seemed commoner than usual during Mar. European Widgeon: a male was on Brad. B. Mar 26-29 (AS et al). Wood Duck: a male spent the winter with domestic ducks on a small pond at the U. of Roch. Redhead: 800 (Max.) on Sod. B. Feb 24 (DRC) probably represent birds frozen out of regular wintering quarters on Canandaigua L.; 1500 in the same place Mar 17 by the same observer was by far the highest number reported. Ring-necked Duck: 100 at Groveland Mar 30 (AM et al) was the max. count for this species. Canvasback: 65 reported from e.Ls. Feb 19 (AEK), probably represents birds frozen out of regular winter quarters. Greater Scaup: 2600 on the Gen. R. Feb 12 (WCL) is a somewhat higher count than usual. A high count of 1,000 Old Squaws were an e.Ls. Dec 2 (JM). An imm. Harlequin Duck was at Man. Jan 1 (WCL), it was not reported again. Twelve Surf Scoters were on L. Ont. Dec 2 (JM). Two Common Scoters were on the Gen. R. Feb 10

(WL, RM). Ruddy Duck: four on Iron. B. Dec. 16 (AEK, WL); single birds were at Man. Jan 29 (TET) and on Gen. R. Feb 17 (WPW) and Mar 9 (AS); several were reported at scattered points during late Mar. Hooded Merganser: 40 at Brad. B. Dec 1 (AS et al); this species usually appears in the local area in peak numbers in late fall just prior to the freeze-up in mid-Dec.

**Hawks — Owls:** Turkey Vultures: 17 at Brad. B. Mar 30 (RTD et al). Goshawk: five reported from the Brad. B. hawk lookout, two Mar 17, one Mar 24 and two Mar 30; all these hawks were seen by several experienced obs. High counts of other hawks, all at the Brad. B. lookout by numerous obs. were: Sharp-shinned—30, Mar 30; Cooper's—12, Mar 24; Red-tailed—150, Mar 30; Red-shouldered—140, Mar 24; Rough-legged—10 (scarce this winter), Mar 24; Marsh—25, Mar 24; Sparrow—25, Mar 24 & 30.

Virginia Rail: one was at Island Cottage Mar 26 (RTD), this may have been a wintering bird, although it is hard to understand how it could have wintered in this area. Killdeer: one at Man. Dec 1 (AS et al); one at Con. L. Dec 30 (WCL). The first spring migrant appeared in Greece Mar 5 (EMM, LMZ); 75 were counted passing Man. Mar 25 (WCL et al). Am. Woodcock: there was a heavy spring flight with 31 at Hamlin State Park Mar 26 (AS) and 20 in a swampy hedgerow w. of Brad. B. Mar 30 (RTO et al). Two Dunlin were at Man. Dec 1 (AS et al).

Glaucous Gull: one on Iron. B. Dec. 23 (CC); one on Sod. B. Jan 13 (JM); one at Brad. B. Mar 9-26 (TET et al). Iceland Gull: one was at Summerville Dec 23 (CC) and the same or another individual was at Web. P. Jan 13 (WL et al). Another bird of the Kumlien's subspecies was on Iron. B. Mar 11 (WL). Bonaparte Gull: three on Iron. B. Dec 23 (CC); two at Brad. B. Mar 27 (WCL) were the first spring migrants. Mourning Doves continued their increase as wintering birds, with 150 on the CC Dec 23 and 200 in Rush Jan 11 (GD).

No Snowy Owl reported. Long-eared Owl: one in Scottsville Feb 12 (JWB); seven in thickets w. of Brad. B. Mar 30 (RTO). Short-eared Owl: generally distributed with a max. of ten along the e.Ls. Feb 9 (JF et al). Saw-whet Owl: one in W. Webster Dec 23 (CC) and two near Brad. B. Mar 30 (RTO).

**Goatsuckers — Shrikes:** Six Red-headed Woodpeckers wintered at the Look-over Farm feeder near Avon (JH) and two were at a feeder e. of Pittsford (Peter-son). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one in DEP Dec 1 and Jan 20 (JM et al); one in Rush Dec 24-30 (JH). Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker: one in Brighton Dec 9 (EL); a pair in Mt. Hope Cemetery in Rochester Dec 3 (JLB); apparently this pair wintered in the sw. part of Rochester and was reported regularly until at least Mar 7. While these three birds, plus one in Pittsford in Nov, are the only reports of this species this past winter, the feeling is inescapable that there were others in the area that were unreported. These were the first reports of this species for five years; this incursion was not as pronounced as that of 1956-57.

A very early Tree Swallow was at Brad. B. Mar 17 (WCL et al). Tufted Titmouse: two frequented the McNett-Sunderlin feeders in W. Webster; another pair was at the Davis-Militz feeders in Penfield; there were a few scattered reports but the species seems down in numbers from a year ago. Red-breasted Nuthatches were in DEP and Highland P. in at least usual numbers. Brown Creepers were generally distributed. A Carolina Wren appeared at the John Kennedy feeder in Irondequoit in mid-Dec and was present until early Mar (JK) and another was at York until at least Mar 15 (JH). Long-billed Marsh Wren: one, at Long Pond Mar 17 (RTD), probably a wintering bird. Mockingbird: one in W. Webster Dec 23 to at least Mar 21 (MS et al); another one reported irregularly from Fishers (CI). Catbirds: two in DEP Dec 23 (CC), one of these birds was there until late Jan; two in Greece Jan 20 (TET); it is doubtful if any of these survived as they were unreported later in the winter. One Brown Thrasher was in Brighton Jan 19-21 (AS et al). Robins: relatively few wintered; 300 were in migration at Brad. B. Mar 17 (WCL et al). An early Hermit Thrush was at Brad. B. Mar 30 (RTO et al). A max. of 15 Eastern Bluebirds were at Brad. B. Mar 25 (WCL) and a few were appearing in their nesting areas s. and e. of Rochester in late Mar. Golden-crowned Kinglets were scarce, with only three reports until the start of the spring migration late in Mar. Two early Water Pipits were at Web. P. Mar 17, (AEK), and few more had appeared by the end of the month. The only Bohemian Waxwing reported was at Pultneyville Mar 21 (DRC). Occasional Loggerhead Shrikes were reported during the last few days of Mar.

**Vireos — Warblers:** Up to 20 Myrtle Warblers were at Rush during the winter and were still present Mar 15 (JH). This is rather surprising as no bayberry grows in this area. Red Cedar is found however.

**Blackbirds — Sparrows:** Red-winged Blackbird: a flock of about 20 wintered in Penfield and other flocks of moderate size wintered along the lake; 5000 were in migration at Brad. B. Mar 17 (WCL et al). Rusty Blackbirds: about 20 wintered in Irondequoit and Penfield (HSM et al) and some were reported in the large mixed flocks of blackbirds along the lake. Common Grackle: two in Irondequoit and two in Greece on CC Dec 23; 10,000 in migration at Brad. B. Mar 17 (WCL et al). Brown-headed Cowbird: seem to be increasing as winter residents, especially around feeders; a flock of 50 was in DEP Dec 2 (MSA, PHZ); 40 in Greece Jan 20 (TET); 3000 were in migration at Brad. B. Mar 17 (WCL et al). Cardinals wintered successfully and seemed more common than ever in the area. Evening Grosbeaks, like all northern finches except Pin Siskins, were scarce, the max. count being eight in Webster Jan 18 (AEK). Purple Finches were common both around feeders and in fruit-bearing trees, with a high count of 25 in Rochester Feb 19 (LMZ). Pine Grosbeaks were unreported. Common Redpoll: 150, Hamlin State Park, Mar 2 (TET et al) was by far the highest count, although a few smaller flocks were reported. Pine Siskin: were generally reported with max. of 200 in DEP Mar 17 (HSM, AS). Red Crossbill: 10 in Rush Mar 5 (JH), only report. White-winged Crossbill: only one, in Highland P. Mar 10-21 (JF et al). Rufous-sided Towhee: one wintered at the Lookover Farm feeder s. of Avon, which showed high morale when seen Feb 24 (JF, HSM); another in Rochester for some time in Jan (AM); two were near Brad. B. Mar 30 (HSM et al); it is hard to determine if these were wintering birds or very early spring migrants as this species usually does not appear in our area until Apr 15-20.

A Savannah Sparrow was at the Rohner feeder in Greece from Dec 12-18 (RLR). Oregon Junco: one at Izzard feeder in Greece Dec 23-30; one at Iron. B. Dec 23 (CC); two spent the winter at the Kennedy feeder in Irondequoit; another plus a puzzling hybrid wintered at the McNett feeder in W. Webster. Field Sparrow: one in Greece Dec 23 (CC); one at feeder in Union Hill Jan 15 to at least Mar 21 (MS). White-crowned: two in Greece Dec 23 (CC); max. of 11 at the Culver feeder s. of Scottsville during the winter, why this feeder is so attractive to these birds is unknown to this writer, it will be remembered that a maximum of 20 wintered at this feeder last year. Fox Sparrow: two at a feeder in Union Hill Feb 9 (WL); one was present until at least Mar 21 (MS); they appeared early in spring migration, with 10 along the w.Ls. Mar 30 (RTO et al). Lapland Longspur: 41 in Greece Dec 1 (WCL); 50 in Hamlin Jan 13 (WCL et al); 50 s. of Avon Feb 24 (JF, HSM). Max. counts of Snow Buntings were 1,600 in Hamlin Jan 13 (GOS hike) and 1,500 near Lyons Mar 23 (DRC).

54 Luella Street, Rochester 9

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### REGION 3— FINGER LAKES

SALLY F. HOYT

This was one of the coldest seasons on record, with temperatures averaging 10°-15° below normal — in complete contrast to last year. Snowfall was actually little above normal, but because of the extreme cold, the ground was white from mid-December to mid-March. Severe blizzard conditions Dec 30-Jan 1, with many feeding station operators reporting a drop in bird-life immediately thereafter, while others — perhaps having more cover — noted little change. During the last few days of February, Cayuga Lake froze completely for the first time in many years. (The time of the last complete freeze is a point of argument.) Starving and dead waterfowl were picked up everywhere, dabblers and divers suffering alike. When the first flocks of Geese arrived, Mar 10-12, they rested on the ice north of Aurora — an unusual sight. Since Montezuma was frozen from Dec 12 until Mar 24, the Geese were late in making use of the refuge but then came in, in larger numbers

than other years: the Mar 29 census showed 15,570 Canada Geese, 20 Blue Geese and 15 Snow Geese. Only 805 ducks were found on this census, as opposed to 1475 last year, but only 10% of the pools were ice-free this year. (J. Morse).

**Highlights:** unusual numbers of Whistling Swans, Snow and Blue Geese, in migration in March. Two records of Barrow's Goldeneye. Continuing drop in wintering waterfowl on Cayuga and Seneca Lakes. A possible, but unverified Hawk-Owl near Dryden in February. Absence, for the most part, of wintering Icterids. Dickcissel, second recent winter record, at Ithaca. Purple Finch invasion in Feb and Mar, heaviest since 1939, but tapering off west of Cayuga Lake.

First New York State record of the Green-tailed Towhee, present from mid-December through March, in Ithaca. Oregon Junco at Ithaca. With the Western Kingbird that was present in October, five western species were recorded from October to February in the Ithaca area: Barrow's Goldeneye, Western Kingbird, Dickcissel, Green-tailed Towhee and Oregon Junco.

Abbreviations used in this report: MFWR — Montezuma Federal Wildlife Refuge; SWS — Sapsucker Woods Sanctuary; Cay. L. — Cayuga Lake; Sen. L. — Seneca Lake; Springs — Spgs.; Chem. R. — Chemung River; W. E. Benning — WEB; D. Mc Ilroy — DMcl; B. Strath — BS; J. Weske — JW.

**Loons — Ducks:** Common Loon: one, only, on waterfowl census; scattered reports in Mar from Cay. L.; no marked migration noted. Red-necked Grebe: one, Feb 25-Mar 31, Eldredge Park, Elmira (rare here); three, Feb and Mar, Vclois on Sen. L., one Mar 25, Cay. L. (DMcl). Great Blue Heron: one, Dec 24, Sheldrake on Cay. L. (Ailene Black); one, Jan and Feb, Ithaca watershed, (V. Hannan), rarely winters. Common Egret: one, Dec 5 (late), Branchport (C. Spiker). Black-crowned Night Heron: one, Mar 23 (first), Elmira (W. Howard). Mute Swan: one, Feb 27-28, Sheldrake on Cay. L.; one (same bird ?) Dresden on Sen. L., Mar 10; one, Icst of Mar, Horseheads dump. First feral Mute Swan in Region 3 in many years. Whistling Swan: one, imm., mid-Dec, Geneva (L. Ward); one, Mar 8, Elmira; 19, Keuka L. Mar 24; 52 Mar 24, Frontenac Pt., Cay. L. (DMcl); 20-30, Mar 24, flooded river meadows between Hornell and Canisteo (W. Groesbeck); unusual numbers for spring migration in the Region. Canada Goose: unusually heavy migration, beginning Mar 10. So little of Cay. L. open at that time that thousands rested on ice at north end. Est. 10,000 at Union Spgs., Mar 23, 20-25,000 by Mar 31. 125-150 wintered, partly on MFWR, partly on Cay. L.; 25 on Sen. L. Jan 25, may have been of this flock. Brant: 32 (last) Sheldrake (Coopers); one (first) Mar 13 Elmira (Van Duzer). See above for comments on geese at MFWR. Mallard: 400 wintered at Sapsucker Woods and consumed approx. five tons of corn. 842 on waterfowl census was less than one-third the count of a year ago. Black Ducks: 100 wintered SWS. Count of 2092 on waterfowl census was two-thirds that of a year ago. Down on Sen. L. up on Keuka L. Green-winged Teal: one (rare in winter) all winter, Waterloo (J. Walker). Shoveler: one (first) Mar 21 SWS. Wood Duck: three wintered SWS until Feb, two rest of winter. Redheads: continued decrease but less marked. Appearance on Chemung R. at Elmira, Mar 8-20, unusual in spring. Ring-necked Duck: 11 only, on waterfowl census mid-Jan, 44 in 1962; 300 (first peak) Mar 27, near Montezuma Village (W. Benning). Canvasback and Scaup were down 50% from last year, the first waterfowl census on which Scaup have shown such a drop, in recent years. Goldeneyes: fewer on all lakes. Barrow's Goldeneye: one female, Feb 23-Mar 1, Sheldrake (only the third recent record for Cay. L. Basin) (DMcl et al); one male Chemung R. Elmira, Mar 8, one male (probably same bird) Sen. L., Mar 10 (B. Strath). Bufflehead: 92 in mid-Jan, as opposed to 73 a year ago. Oldsquaw: fewer this year; four on Cay. L., mid-Jan; seven Sen. L., Feb 18 (B. Strath). White-winged Scoter: one, Feb 27 (first) Sheldrake (J. Propst); one Mar 25, Sen. L. (E. McDougall). Ruddy: three wintered Cay. L. (rare in winter).

**Hawks — Owls:** Goshawk: one (rare) Feb 14, SWS (A. A. Allen). Fewer reports than usual of Sharp-shins and Coopers. Fewer Red-tailed wintered. Red-shouldered Hawk: one (rare in winter) Feb 1, Odessa (BS). Rough-legged Hawk: far fewer than most winters, for example, no reports Dec and Feb at Keuka. Marsh Hawk: one Dec and one Jan report. Peregrine: (rare) one, Dec 13, Elmira (M. Welles). Golden Eagle: one, Dec 6, shot at Savannah, no further details known, but picture in local papers. Bald Eagle: one Dec 1, last at MFWR until Mar 19 when single adult returned; one immature seen Mar 31, MFWR (JM); one adult seen near Ithaca Jan 18 (Kortright).

Bobwhite: severe winter eliminated most of the remaining birds from the '60 release around Ithaca; the flock of 13 at SWS dwindled to two males. Ring-necked Pheasant: scarce at Watkins Glen. Wild Turkey: fed near highway, Pony Hollow, late Feb and Mar. Coot: numbers wintered, comparable to other years. Killdeer: (rare in winter) one near Dryden, Dec-Jan; one on shore of Cay. L.; migrants returned Mar 5 and 6. Woodcock: Mar 15 (first) (Cox). Common Snipe: one (rare in winter) Feb 9, near Clyde (WEB); one Feb 25, n. of Horseheads (K. Fudge). Glaucus Gull: one Mar 5, Cay. L. at Myers; one Mar 9-17, Sen. L. (M. Smith); one Mar 31 MFWR (WEB). No Iceland Gulls reported. Great Black-backed Gull: fewer on Cay. L. this year; one Dec 11, Owasco L. (W. H. Allison). On Seneca L., Ring-billed outnumbered Herring Gulls. Mourning Dove: numbers up over last winter; 10-30 reported at several feeding stations. Snowy Owl: up to six in Keuka-Branchport area; missing elsewhere. Short-eared Owl: no large concentrations, but up to four reported from five localities.

**Goatsuckers — Shrikes:** Belted Kingfisher: one, Jan 1, MFWR (W. Spofford); one, near Dryden; by Feb none, no open water. Flicker: two or three wintered near Ithaca. Red-bellied Woodpecker: at least nine individuals at different locations in Cay. L. basin, an increase over last year. Red-headed Woodpecker: one only, s. of Geneva, Feb 8 (J. Weske). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one, Dec 14 (last) Ithaca (H. O'Leary). Horned Lark: more reports of winter birds than usual; migrant flocks appeared late Feb — later than usual. Blue Jays: reported "extremely abundant" by all reporters; 20-25 at some feeders. Crow: 800-1000 in roost east of Ithaca, located Mar 9 (Dwight Chamberlain).

Tufted Titmouse: one, first record, at Dryden; Keuka pair gone; fewer feeding station reports throughout region than last year. Red-breasted Nuthatch: three, regular at Ithaca feeders; one, Alpine. Mockingbird: one, Jan, Aurora (Schackletons) — as in three winters past; one, West Hill, Ithaca, Jan-Mar; one, Watkins Glen; one, Cayuga Heights, Ithaca, in Dec; two, Hickory Grove Rd., Elmira; pair that has been at Esperanza disappeared. Catbird: one (late) Dec 9, s. of Ithaca (G. Swanson). Brown Thrasher: one (late) Dec 29 Moss Hill, Horseheads. Robin: only one wintering bird reported at Ithaca. Hermit Thrush: one, entire winter (extremely rare wintering bird) Cayuga Heights, Ithaca (E. H. Smith). Bluebird: first, third week of Mar. Golden-crowned Kinglet: winter reports not as abundant as might have been expected after high fall counts. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: one (very rare in winter) Dec and to mid-Jan, Freeville (L. Beck, S. Hoyt). Pipit: 200 (high) Dutch Hill, Elmira (O. York). Northern Shrike: only six reports. Loggerhead Shrike: one (first) Mar 31, n. of Dresden (WEB).

**Warblers — Sparrows:** Myrtle Warbler: only one known to winter, Ithaca. House Sparrow: flocks, in some areas, decimated by Jan 1 blizzard. Meadowlark: one, wintering bird, or early arrival, Feb 1, Irelandville (B. Bell). In general, few icterids attempted to winter and almost none survived of those which tried, with exception of Cowbirds in Watkins and in Geneva-Waterloo area; first migrating flocks, Mar 9-11. Cardinal: increasingly larger winter concentrations noted; for example, 31 at feeding station of the V. Burgess, Slaterville Rd., Ithaca; survived severe winter well at Hornell. Dickcissel: one (rare) Dec and to early Jan, at Houghton feeder, four mi. n.w. Ithaca. Evening Grosbeak: first appeared at numerous feeders Jan 20-22; built up slowly in numbers to early Mar, but absent at many feeders that usually have them; thinning out some by late Mar; early flocks predominantly females. Purple Finch: first, mid-Feb; by end of Mar were everywhere in eastern half of region; THE winter finch. Common Redpoll: very few reports. Pine Siskins: a few with the Purple Finches. American Goldfinch: numerous, coming to feeders more than usual. Green-tailed Towhee: apparently first state record for this species; from early or mid-Dec, still present Apr 1; at John Anderson's feeder, West Hill, Ithaca, seen by scores and photographed. Vesper Sparrow: one (late) Dec 12, banded, remained several more days, Etna (J. Weske). Oregon Junco: several reported, one positively identified, Hakes' feeder, West Hill, Ithaca. Tree Sparrows: scarcer than usual at Hornell in usual numbers elsewhere. Field Sparrow: (unusual in winter) one, Jan-Feb, Beardsley feeder, Watkins Glen; one, Jan-Feb, Welles feeder, Elmira. White-throated Sparrow: fewer wintered than usual. Song Sparrow: fewer wintered than usual. Lapland Longspur: more reports than usual, but possibly this reflects closer inspection of flocks of buntings and larks. Snow Bunting: flocks of 1000 or more in area.

Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, Ithaca  
The Kingbird

## REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

LESLIE E. BEMONT

It was a cold winter with a little more snow than average. The cold was a matter of consistency rather than extremes, the lowest recorded temperature being 14 below zero Feb 8 at Broome Co. Airport. As a result of the persistent cold, snow cover was essentially complete from Dec 7 thru Mar 16 except for about one week in mid-Jan. The heaviest snowfall, about 8 inches, didn't come until Mar 1 and appeared to mark the end of winter in a practical sense. It was the warmest Mar since 1946, the temperature reaching 74° on the 26th.

It was not one of our most interesting winters for bird observations. A few "semi-hardies", such as the Baltimore Oriole at Johnson City and a Brown Thrasher at Owego, started the winter with us but soon succumbed or moved on, with occasional exceptions. Even Cowbirds thinned out in February. The snow cover kept northern raptors to a minimum, although Cooper's, Red-tailed and Sparrow Hawks seemed to do all right. Except for Goldfinches the winter finches were an empty chapter in most of the region until the latter part of February when Purple Finches and Pine Siskins moved in. Evening Grosbeaks also put in a belated appearance but were in somewhat disappointing numbers. Disappointing to all our bird banders, at least, but it must be admitted that it is interesting to see the progression of a more gradual invasion for a change rather than the usual rapid deluge that makes analysis difficult.

The early Barn Swallow and Purple Martin at least suggest that the migration is getting ahead of itself in response to the early warm weather. So we may have some tragedies if a cold snap comes along. The two most startling records of the period were the Scarlet Tanagers around Cortland and the Black Vulture at Greene. We can safely attribute the former to a freak occurrence, possibly of a meteorological nature, that has little significance with respect to the species involved. It is unfortunate, though, that a specimen could not be obtained. The Black Vulture, on the other hand, tempts one to speculate that it is an indication of things to come.

Contributors: WB — W. Bartlett; LB — L. Bemont; DB — D. Bendle; BB — B. Burgher; RB — R. Burland; GC — G. Corderman; NC — Naturalists Club; C, JD — C. & J. Davis; M, AD — M. & A. Davis; LD — L. Dean; AE — A. Evelein; CG — C. Gerould; JG — J. Gustafson; CH — C. Howard; SL — S. Lincoln; M, DL — M. & D. Lynch; ML — M. Lynch; HM — H. Marsi; JN — J. New; RP — R. Pantle; MS — M. Sheffield; RS — R. Sheffield; TT — T. Taylor; N, EW — N. & E. Washburn; R, SW — R. & S. White; CW — C. Wilkins; RW — R. Williams; SW — S. Wilson; WY — W. Young.

**Loons — Ducks:** Common Loon: no reports. Red-necked Grebe: one, Feb 22, Oneonta (JN), now in collection at Oneonta State Teachers College; one, Feb 23, in snow bank near Maine, now in private collection of L. Loomis. Horned Grebe: Feb 10 (first), Owego, (RW et al); a few scattered reports until 8 plus, Mar 30, Whitney Point (MS). Pied-billed Grebe: one, Feb 12, Bainbridge (R, SW) and one, Mar 31, Whitney Point (MS); the only reports. Great Blue Heron: winter records at Owego (CG), Triple Cities area (M, AD) and Cortland (H. Axtell, JG); first migrant Mar 21, Chenango Forks (M, AD).

Whistling Swan: 2, Dec 2, in flight over Cortland (CW); 3, Mar 24, Owego (R. Gilfillan). Canada Goose: Feb 10, Owego (RW); migrants Mar 8, McLean (R. Haines) and small numbers in other areas Mar 9 and 10; Mar 16, another small flight; Mar 23 to 26, very heavy flights with numbers well into thousands; small daily flights to end of month. Mallards: 350, most of winter population, at Sherburne Game Farm (R, SW) and 80 at Margaretville (SW); migrants Mar 23. Black Duck: about normal winter population, but as usual more scattered than Mallards. Pintail: Dec 2, still at Whitney Point (NC); 6, Mar 23, back at Whitney Point (HM, GC). Green-winged Teal: 25, Mar 28, Owego (RW). Blue-winged Teal: 2, Mar 28, Owego (RW), very early. American Widgeon: 2, Mar 23, Whitney Point (HM, GC). Wood Duck: Mar 25, Geene (C, JB).

Redhead: Feb 10, Owego (RW et al); nine, (max), Mar 22, Endwell (N, EW); also reported at Little York and Homer (JG). Ring-necked Duck: Mar 3, Owego (CG, RW); 50 plus, Whitney Point, Mar 30 and 31 (MS). Canvasback: winter records

at Owego and Endwell; also at Little York and Homer in latter half of Mar (JG). Scaup: Feb 9 to Mar 9, regular reports of small numbers, mostly Greaters; Mar 30, 10 plus Lessers, Whitney Point (MS). Common Goldeneye: the usual small number of wintering birds; noticeable increase in numbers about Feb 17 and present to end of period. Bufflehead: Feb 10, Owego (RW et al); two, Feb 17, Owego (SL) and seven, Mar 9, Owego (SL). Hooded Merganser: one, Mar 17, Endwell (LB et al); eight, Mar 23, Whitney Point (HM, GC); also at Cortland and Homer (JG). Common Merganser: noticeable increase in numbers in mid-Feb; 67, Mar 17, in one mile stretch of river at Campville (LB et al). Red-breasted Merganser: Feb 3, Owego (DB); Mar 3, Owego (RW, CG); nine, Mar 30, Whitney Point (MS).

**Hawks — Owls:** Turkey Vulture: two, Mar 28, Deposit (SW). Black Vulture: one, Mar 22, Greene (WB); Mr. Bartlett is well acquainted with the species having lived in the south and he still takes several trips a year to Virginia or South Carolina. Being fully aware of the rarity of the species in this area at any time, to say nothing of early spring, he took special care in observing the bird and reported the details in writing. The bird was low enough so that both the "white" patches in the wings and the toes projecting beyond the tail could be easily seen although it could not have been in sight for much more than half a minute. Goshawk: one report, Mar 10, Berkshire (M, DL). Sharp-shinned Hawk: Mar 11, Cortland (CW), the first spring report. Cooper's Hawk: reported fairly frequently all winter. Red-tailed Hawk: also reported frequently all winter. Red-shouldered Hawk: Feb. 22, Newark Valley (LD); Mar 14, Chenango (C. Wilson). Rough-legged Hawk: one at Owego dump all during period (CG); one, Jcn 13, Oxford (LB, RP), dark phase; one, Mar 17, Choco-nut Center (RS). Bald Eagle: Feb 6, Lounsbury in Tioga Co. (LD). Marsh Hawk: one, Jan 1, Binghamton (NC); Mar 6, Owego (D. Raftis); one, Mar 23, Whitney Point (HM, GC). Sparrow Hawk: quite plentiful all winter in the Binghamton-Owego area; at Oneonta none until Mar 11 (RB).

Bob-white: one heard Mar 24, Homer (J. Webster). Killdeer: one, Dec 7, Hancock (SW); Jan 12 and 16, Greene (C, JB); one, Mar 1, Ingraham Hill south of Binghamton (CH); Mar 14, first of main body of migrants, McLean (R. Haines). Woodcock: Mar 16 (first), Owego (TT); Mar 25 (next), Binghamton (R. & J. Saunders). Common Snipe: Jan 3, McLean Bog (C. Wilson); 3, Mar 26, Lounsbury (RW, W. White). Herring Gull: usual winter numbers. Ring-billed Gull: one, Jan 1, Endicott (N, EW); migrants Mar 17, Endwell (LB et al); 80 plus, Mar 24, Vestal (RS). Mourning Dove: quite a few winter records; the largest flocks were 20, Newark Valley (LD); 14, Homer (JG); migrants not obvious until Mar 23. Screech Owl: numbers improving; one was living in the basement of the Baptist Church in Homer during Jan (JG), there must be some hidden significance that escapes me; one, Dec 24, Johnson City (Dixon), observed in bright moonlight visiting feeder to eat peanut butter! Horned Owl: reported regularly from several areas. Snowy Owl: none.

**Goatsuckers — Shrikes:** Belted Kingfisher: reported fairly frequently all winter except for first two weeks of Mar. Yellow-shafted Flicker: one, wintered at Choco-nut Center although seldom seen (RS, MS); Feb 26, Cortland (CW); migrants in numbers, Mar 30. Pileated Woodpecker: reports becoming frequent and were particularly so in Mar. Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker: one, Dec. 1, near Oxford (WB). Phoebe: Mar 15, Vestal (RP); regular reports from Mar 25. Horned Lark: seemed numerous at Oneonta (JN), Cortland (JG) and the Triple Cities (NC). Tree Swallow: Mar 25, Greene (C, JD), first report; 300, Mar 26, Choconut Center (RS). Barn Swallow: one, Mar 19, McGraw (J. Greenfield) and Purple Martin: Mar 30, Smithboro in Tioga Co. (RW); both extremely early.

Blue Jay: abnormally plentiful everywhere. Crow: here in some numbers all winter: 100 plus, Jan 20, Waverly (RS, MS); increase in numbers noted in Oneonta in late Feb (RB). Black-capped Chickadee: down in numbers at Oneonta (RB) but in good numbers everywhere else. Tufted Titmouse: reported from Hancock (SW), Newark Valley (LD) and at least five stations in the Triple Cities area, several of them new. Red-breasted Nuthatch: at least 6 wintered in the Chenango Forks-Chenango Valley State Park area (M, AD-MS), but nowhere else were they reported regularly until Mar. Winter Wren: Dec 17 thru Feb 1, Owego (M. Middaugh); Mar 24, Owego (AE); Mar 31, Binghamton (HM). Carolina Wren: Mar 30, Owego (Mrs. A. Stiles); the only report. Mockingbird: Jan 1, Kattleville, north of Binghamton (LB); the only one. Brown Thrasher: Dec 29 and Jan 1, Owego (AE).

Robin: Dec and Jan records from the Triple Cities (NC), Oneonta (RB) and Homer (H. Stafford) but no specifically Feb records; Mar 4, Berkshire (ML) first migrants; regular from Mar 15. Hermit Thrush: Mar 26, Owego (TT), the only report. Bluebird: one Mar 16 (first), Ingraham Hill (CH); Mar 17, Berkshire, (ML); regular from Mar 23. Golden-crowned Kinglet: not many reported in Jan and Feb; numbers started picking up Mar 10. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Mar 2, Johnson City, (RP); Mar 30, Berkshire (ML). Water Pipit: four, Mar 31, at Cranberry Lake in nearby Pennsylvania (N, EW). Cedar Waxwing: sporadic visitors at Oneonta (RB), Owego and in the Triple Cities area all winter. Bohemian Waxwing: one, Jan 7, Spencer (M. Wiita), larger size and rufous patch under tail noted and reported by letter. Northern Shrike: several reports; from Oxford (A. Stratton), Summer Hill in Cortland Co. (Mrs. W. Mulholland), Norwich (R, SW), Newark Valley (LD) and the Triple Cities.

**Starling — Warblers:** Starling: at Newark Valley (LD), Oneonta (RB) and Cortland (JG) a decrease in numbers during the winter was noted; after Mar 15 at Cortland and by the end of the period at Newark Valley numbers were back to normal. Myrtle Warbler: Dec 29, Berkshire (ML); the only warbler report during the period.

**Blackbirds — Sparrows:** Meadowlark: last fall record, Dec 12, Greene (C, JD); a winter record, Feb 1, Owego (RW); spring migrants, Mar 11, Greene (C, JD). Red-winged Blackbird: there were several winter records from Owego and the Triple Cities; one at Newark Valley took quite a fancy to suet (LD); 2, Mar 2, Cortland (P. McLaughlin) appear to be the first spring migrants; reported regularly from Mar 9 and in large numbers from Mar 15. Baltimore Oriole: one at Johnson City until Dec 15 (RP). Rusty Blackbird: 20, Feb 9, Owego (G. Kirk), no details provided; Mar 17, Greene (WB). Common Grackle: no winter reports; Mar 11, Owego (Tioga Bird Club), the first migrants; regular from Mar 15. Brown-headed Cowbird: frequent reports at feeders in Cortland and Triple Cities areas during Dec and Jan; very few in Feb until last few days, then gradual build up in numbers; regular after Mar 11; a flock of 20, Mar 17, Norwich (R. SW); 34 banded Mar 18 and 20 more Mar 20 at Deposit (SW). Scarlet Tanager: one pair, Mar 20, Cortland (Mrs. L. Leach); one male, Mar 24, near Skaneateles Lake (R. Davis); one male, Cortland Mar 30 (J. Songdahl); Dr. Gustafson questioned the observers carefully before forwarding the reports and, hopefully, a field note will be forthcoming.

Cardinal: the increase in numbers and colonization of new areas continues; "many around here", Newark Valley (LD); "gaining in Oneonta" (RB); "seen at Sherburne, Norwich, New Berlin and White Store" (R, SW); 24 in one flock, Dec 1, Chenango Forks (M, AD). Dickcissel: one, Dec 29 thru Mar 6, Owego (B. Hewlitt). Evening Grosbeak: only scattered reports, usually of very small numbers, until a substantial increase in numbers in late Jan at Oneonta (JN), RB), around Feb 6 at Norwich (R, SW), mid-Feb in the Triple Cities (NC) and late Mar at Cortland (JG); numbers never approached those of peak years. Purple Finch: 20 to 30 at a number of feeders in Oneonta throughout the winter (RB); appeared at Newark Valley and the Triple Cities in appreciable numbers Feb 21 and gradually increased to quite large numbers, by the end of the period, at Cortland and the Triple Cities. Pine Grosbeak: one, Dec 9, Chenango Valley State Park (RS); Jan 1, 5 at Owego (AE) and one at Berkshire (ML); the only reports. Redpoll: 27, Feb 23, Norwich (R, SW); 2, Mar 17, Preston (R, SW); very scattered reports at Oneonta (RB) but none elsewhere. Pine Siskin: "scattered reports", Oneonta (RB); Dec 29, Owego (CG); Jan 20, Chenango Valley State Park (M, AD); Feb 15, a banded one reported at Deposit (SW); these were the only reports before Feb 28 but from then until Mar 14 when 100 plus were at Binghamton (WY), numbers built up slowly in the Triple Cities area and they were very numerous there for the rest of the month. But nowhere else was such a build up reported. One, found dead at Cortland, Mar 18 (JG) was the only report from that area during the period. Goldfinch: reported in quite appreciable numbers all winter from several areas but in the Triple Cities numbers increased further in mid-Feb. White-winged Crossbill: 2 small flocks, Dec 1, Greene (WB); 5, Mar 16, Binghamton (CH); the only reports received. Rufous-sided Towhee: one, Jan 1, Chenango Bridge (LB); one, Feb 5 and stayed past the end of the period, Castle Creek (BB); one, Mar 5, Cortland (Mrs. L. Atkinson); one, Mar 14, Binghamton (WY).

Savannah Sparrow: one, throughout the period, Berkshire (M, DL). Vesper Sparrow: Mar 26, Owego (CG). Slate-colored Junco: fairly large, although well dispersed,

wintering population in the Triple Cities area and Deposit; migrants started appearing at Deposit Mar 16, but not in large flocks; at Cortland, where the winter population was almost nil, and Oneonta large flocks started appearing Mar 23. Oregon Junco: one, at Owego (Mrs. E. Williams); one, Mar 10, Castle Creek (BB). Field Sparrow: 2, Dec 18 and 5, Dec 19, Ingraham Hill (CH); one, Mar 1, Owego (M. White); migrants, Mar 26, Owego (CG). White-throated Sparrow: one, throughout the period, Tioga Center (P. Code); 2, Dec 17, Ingraham Hill (CH); one, Dec 25 to Dec 30, Chocoanut Center (RS, MS); 3 Chenango Bridge (LB). Fox Sparrow: Mar 19 (first) Owego (TT); 20 banded between Mar 25 and 30, Deposit (SW). Song Sparrow: 14, Jan 1, Binghamton Christmas Census (NC); several other Dec and Jan records; none in Feb until the 17th when migrants started arriving; numbers fairly small until Mar 16. Snow Bunting: small and medium sized flocks all during the period, particularly during Feb and Mar at Cortland; one "huge" flock at Newark Valley Jan 29 (LD).

710 University Ave., Endwell

## REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

DAVID B. PEAKALL AND MARGARET S. RUSK

The winter weather was characterized by temperatures below normal and snow-fall near to or somewhat below normal. A warming trend from the middle of March was unbroken to the end of the period.

Waterfowl census figures were low for most species, mainly due to ice conditions. However the increase of Redheads and Canvasbacks was encouraging. The almost continuous watching of hawk migration at Derby Hill on the shore of Lake Ontario by John Haugh has yielded interesting observations.

An outstanding feature of the winter was the fine late flight of Purple Finches. There were moderate numbers of Pine Siskins, especially in March; other winter finches were scarce. Rarities include Barrow's Goldeneye and a Magpie.

Abbreviations for places: HIGMA — Howland's Island Game Management Area; Hghld For — Highland Forest; L — Lake; Oakwood — cemetery, Syracuse; Onon—Onondaga; R — river; SSSP — Selkirk Shores State Park; Skan — Skaneateles; Syr — Syracuse; TRGMA — Three Rivers Game Management Area; Arr — Arrived; nr — near.

Regular observers and censuses: DA — Dorothy Ackley; BB — Benjamin Burtt; BBFS — B. Burtt's feeder survey (taken the first week of each winter month; numbers cited are per 100 feeder reports); CC — Christmas Census; EE — Emma Evans; DP — David Peakall — JP — Jean Propst; PP — Paul Paquette; MR — Margaret Rusk; BS — Betty Starr; FS — Fritz Scheider; IS — Ina Stone; RS — Roberta Seaman; SCC — Syracuse Christmas Census; WFC — Waterfowl Census.

**Loons — Ducks:** Common Loon: one, Jan 1-16 Onon L; one rescued from ice Oneida L Jan 19; no migrants reported to end of period. Red-throated Loon: one, Dec 22 Oswego (MR, FS) is first winter record. Red-necked Grebe rescued from roadside, Sherrill, Feb 11, remained on local pond where released until Feb 20 (DA). Horned Grebe: two, Jan 13 Skan L (WFC), lowest on any WFC; recent counts have been 20-60. Pied-billed Grebe: recorded during the winter at Fulton, Oswego, and Sherrill; first migrant Mar 27 SSSP. Great Blue Heron: two, SCC; one, nr Tully Jan 15 (fide BB); one, Gully Rd nr Skan Jan 7 (RS); one, nr Limestone Creek Feb. 11 (fide BB); first migrant Mar 21. American Bittern: one, Mar 31 Boliver (MR), very early.

Whistling Swan: one, Fulton first week of Dec (Mrs. C. Hall); one, Lakeview Dec 18 (JP, MR). Canada Goose: excellent spring flight, 11,000 in HIGMA — Seneca flats area Mar 29 (DP). Snow Goose: two, HIGMA last week of Mar (R. Nevinger). Blue Goose: one, Seneca R flats Mar 29 (DP).

Numbers of winter dabbling duck were low; the WFC of Black Duck (957) was the lowest of recent years. There was no large-scale return flight by the end of the period. Pintail: one-two, Oswego thru winter; first migrant Onon L Mar 9. Green-winged Teal: one wintered, Syr (JP, BS); arr Seneca flats Mar 29. Blue-winged Teal: arr Mar 30 Mexico. American Widgeon: arr Mar 28 Seneca flats. Shoveler: one, Oswego Dec 22; arr HIGMA Mar 24. Wood Duck: last, HIGMA Jan 1; arr Phoenix Mar 9.

Redhead: 400 Skan L (WFC); otherwise only small numbers although there was some increase over recent years. Ring-necked Duck: three, Oswego Dec 22; one, nr Marcellus Feb 17; first migrant Mar 9; present in fair numbers by end of period. Canvasback: 205, Oneida L Dec 8; 325, Skan L Jan 13; otherwise only small numbers. Scaup: WFC of 4500 was rather low; numbers remained approximately constant until mid-Mar. Goldeneye: WFC low due to ice conditions along L Ontario. Barrow's Goldeneye: a female, Oswego R Feb 3 (J. Foster, W. Listman, A. Maley, T. Tetlow), excellent description, essentially similar to **Kingbird** XII:44. Bufflehead: after low fall count, winter numbers were about normal with max 125 Feb 3. Old-squaw: max 110, L Ontario Dec 18. King Eider: two, Oswego harbor Feb 1 (R. Sandberg, E. Smith). Common Scoter: one, L Ontario Dec 18 (JP, MR). White-winged Scoter: 165, Dec 8 Oneida L (JP, BS) is a high count away from L Ontario and a late date for so large a number; up to ten seen during the winter, L Ontario. Surf Scoter: two, Oswego Feb 3 (J. Foster et al). Common Merganser: 3000 WFC is low, probably due to most of Oswego harbor being frozen.

**Hawks — Owls:** John Haugh, a graduate student at Syracuse University, has started a day-by-day study of hawk migration from Derby Hill nr Mexico. His report for the period is — Goshawk: 51; max ten, Mar 17. Cooper's Hawk: 49; max 13, Mar 26. Sharp-shinned: 125; max 51, Mar 29. Red-tailed: 8 max 126, Mar 17. Red-shouldered: 809; max; 203, Mar 26. Rough-legged: 136; max 32, Mar 24. Broadwinged: a very early record, Mar 21. Bald Eagle: imm, Mar 17 and 21 were probably this species; adult Mar 26 and 27. Harrier: 127; max 26, Mar 26. Osprey: 5 Mar 29, record early date. Kestrel: 141; max 45, Mar 29.

Turkey Vulture: one, Mar 27 Phoenix (EE). Goshawk: one, present for most of period at Hghld For; one, nr Oswego Dec 22 (W. Spofford); one, Cicero Swamp Feb 17 (MR, BS); one, W. Canada Creek Jan 16 (E. Curtis). Red-tailed: 37 SCC, Dec 23 is a record census count; 29 Bridgeport-Baldwinsvl area, Jan 26. Rough-legged: fair to good wintering numbers, 11 SCC; at least 12, Oswego Co Mar 1 (J. Belknap).

Killdeer: last, Dec 1 Sylvan Beach, first, Mar 4 Kenwood (both PP). Woodcock: arr Ram's Gulch Mar 17, early. Snipe: arr HIGMA Mar 29. Greater Yellowlegs: arr Seneca flats Mar 2. Glaucous Gull: max 5, Oswego Mar 9. Iceland Gull: max 295, Oswego R Jan 20. Herring Gull: 7600, Oswego CC is a record high. Bonaparte's Gull: last, Dec 1 Sylvan Beach; first, Mar 17 Oneida L (both PP). Mourning Dove: 131 SCC, record high; largest individual flocks were 97, Tully Dec 16 (JP) and 60, Oneida Jan 18 (DA), both outside the Syr count area. Saw-whet Owl: one, Rome Mar 1-9 (F. Wyman).

**Goatsuckers — Warblers:** Kingfisher: after Dec, only four reported, in this winter of extensive freeze-up, until late-Mar arrivals. Flicker: after Christmas counts, only six wintering Jan and Feb; some increase Mar before end-of-month arrivals. Pileated: at 22 locations! — the bird is easier to spot in winter and BBFS brings in some additional reports, but even so the local status of this species is quite good. Red-bellied: more regular on the periphery of its Seneca R drainage-area range — one Fulton Dec 22, one Jordan Dec and Jan, two nr Baldwinsvl Feb, one Cato Feb, one Red Creek Feb and Mar, one Fair Haven Feb 3, one Oneida R. Feb 24. Red-headed: high number of wintering records of this uncommon woodpecker — one imm Eaton Dec (G. Church); one Syr Jan, and one each Baldwinsvl and Port Byron (fide BB). Horned Lark: scarce until mid-Feb, then widespread with largest flocks of 300-400 early Mar, Sherrill and Tully.

Blue Jay: mentioned as unusually abundant by observers in all parts of the Region; indices to its numbers are a record high of 180 SCC, 440 Jan BBFS (a next-to-record high), 530 Feb BBFS (highest Feb count in four years), and several field counts of over 20 in a few miles. A Black-billed Magpie found at Hghld For (altitude up to 2000 ft, in s.e. corner of Onon Co) Dec 12 (by JP) was still present at least to Mar 12; it was discovered at the park dump, a site surrounded by deciduous shrubs and conifer plantations, and the park staff has been supplementing its diet there with suet; there is no indication that it was an escape. Crow: absent from Rome area for about a month, until late Feb (H. Aspinwall); a winter roost of over 500 Onon Hill, daily commuting to a nearby dump; marked return flight Syr and L Ontario Mar 12-17 with 5000, Derby Hill Mar 16 and 17.

Tufted Titmouse: fewer than last winter and no new locations, but up to eight Baldwinsvl and two at nearby Jordan (BBFS), two each regularly Brewerton and North Bay, also one Fulton Dec 22 (FS). Red-breasted Nuthatch: very scarce — BBFS only four Dec, four Jan, three Feb, and two Mar; only field reports singles, Hghld For Jan and TRGMA Mar. No wrens on any of the four Regional Christmas counts — this before the onset of extremely cold weather and deep snow. Winter Wren: only one field report; Feb 17 Camillus Valley, between mid-Dec and late Mar. Carolina: two Oakwood on Dec 5 only; two reports s. Syr Jan and Feb (BBFS and fide RS).

Mockingbird: one Mexico (IS) and one Oswego (fide BB) Dec; pair wintered south of Mexico (IS), perhaps of the 1962 Palermo nesting. Half-hardy mimids and thrushes — Catbird: only one, Syr Dec BBFS. Brown Thrasher: one attempted to winter Syr, until Jan 20 (D. Dawley) later found dead. Robin: BBFS five Dec down to two the first week of Mar; field reports, of small groups of up to five Dec and Jan, show a parallel drop-off. Hermit Thrush: one Syr thru winter (BBFS). Bluebird: seven reports totaling 12 individuals from Mar 16 to end of period.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: very scarce after mid-Dec; after Jan 1 the max is six Jan 6 Sherrill; many observers saw none until Mar, but there was no marked Mar flight. Northern Shrike: a rather good flight, with five SCC and up to three/day Jan and Mar. Myrtle Warbler: only two reports, both E. Syr, one Dec BBFS and two SCC.

**Blackbirds — Sparrows:** Meadowlark: scarce, with one SCC and none on other censuses; BBFS only three Jan and one Feb; only field report before Mar is one-two Jan Sherrill. Rusty Blackbird: none later than SCC, two. BBFS shows the other black icterids to have wintered in lower numbers than in recent years. This is especially marked with the Cowbird. The survey of the first week of Mar shows a buildup over Feb in the case of Redwing and Cowbird but not of Grackle. All three appeared in numbers Mar 9-16.

Cardinal: BBFS documents its continued spread north and east with the following maxima — 13 Fulton Feb, seven Pulaski Feb, three Richland Dec, eight Oswego Feb; also regular in the hill-and-valley area of the s.e. part of the Region; 126 SCC again broke the previous record. Evening Grosbeaks: didn't appear around Syr in any numbers until Jan 20; 700 is the lowest Mar BBFS in four years — i.e., only a moderate flight. Purple Finch in contrast irrupted in numbers in Feb and Mar with BBFS Feb 65, twice the previous max, and Mar 850 (100 times the average!) including 105 at one feeder Oneida (Felle); field counts gave no indication of the numbers actually in the area. Redpolls didn't appear until Feb, with max/day 130 Feb 22. Pine Siskin: good Feb-Mar flight with several Mar reports of 50/day and max about 100 Taberg Mar 23. Only three Red Crossbill reports, of pairs or singles. Of White-winged, six reports from various parts of the Region; highest flock count 25 Cicero Bog Dec 17, but more frequently reported in Mar. Junco: small groups never completely absent from the field, with max 12 on Jan 1, HIGMA.

Half-hardy sparrows — Towhee: one each Sherrill, Syr, and Pulaski to late Dec, and one male Fayettevl into Feb — all at feeders. Field Sparrow: four Chittenango Jan (Stickles-fide BB) is unusual. White-crowned: only report one, Feb Sherrill BBFS. White-throated: after Dec all at feeders — one-three, Syr (several locations) and one, Kenwood — through the winter. Fox: one wintered, Sherrill (Hartwig): three, Central Square first week of Mar, before field arrivals (Childs) — these both at feeders. Swamp: one, Jan Kenwood (fide DA); none in field after Dec (two SCC). Song. hardiest of the half-hardies with BBFS Dec five, Jan 19, Feb 25, and Mar 20; also present through the winter in small groups in the field with max 20/day Jan 26 n. of Syr.

Lapland Longspur: one-three with Horned Larks or Snow Buntings, Sherrill Jan and Feb; Tully Feb and early Mar; last three Mar 17 L Ontario, in flock of 2000 Snow Buntings, by far the max flock count of the latter, though flocks of 50-500/Buntings were reported through the period, the larger flocks mostly from late Dec through early Mar.

SUNY Upstate Medical Center, 766 Irving Ave., Syracuse 10

## REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

FRANK A. CLINCH

Many people believe that the winter of 1962-63 was the most severe they have ever experienced. There is ample evidence to support this belief. The first major snow storm started on December 10, and left 18 inches of snow. The total for December was 51 inches of snow or double the average amount for that month. The temperature was three degrees below normal. Most lakes and streams were frozen before Christmas. January added some 58 inches more of snow with major storms on Jan. 15 and 25. Late in the month snow fell on nine consecutive days. There was only one brief thaw in Jan. February, 1963 was the coldest February since 1934 and the third coldest in 63 years. The average daily temperature was 13.8 degrees or 7.7 degrees below normal. The only warm day was Feb. 19 with a temperature of 40 degrees. Early in February the snow depth in the woods at Sears Pond was 52 inches with a water content of 14.8 in. By March 23 the snow depth there was 70 inches with a water content of 27.2 in. Between Oct. 25 and the first day of spring 64 snowy days produced 160 inches or more than 13 ft. of snow. High winds often caused deep drifts.

The deep snow made birding difficult. The roads became "canyons", too narrow for parking and often too deep to see even the tops of trees a hundred yards away. This was a problem in looking for Hawk-Owls. One person said that she could see very little while traveling on a Greyhound bus.

The most unusual birds were the three Hawk-Owls, one in each county. Evening Grosbeaks were scarce until early February when they appeared in Potsdam and about five days later many were seen at several feeders in Watertown. There were always more females than males. Purple Finches began to appear at feeders early in Feb., and their numbers slowly increased. During March they were seen in unusual numbers in most of the region. During the latter half of March birds began arriving at about their usual times.

**Loons — Ducks:** An emaciated Red-necked Grebe found in the snow in Copenhagen late in Feb died a few days later. Canada Geese: 26 seen flying over Watertown Mar 17 at which time there was little open water. In late Mar 1000-2000 were at Perch Lake Game Management Area. Whistling Swan: One at Pt Peninsula Dec 20 (Belknap). Mallard: a female with injured wing found in the snow in Watertown, Jan 1, one in the River at Watertown in Jan. There is always open water in Black River below the city power plant where ducks come when most of the river is frozen. Black Duck: one in the river at Watertown. Green-winged Teal: 2-3 pairs at Sulphur Springs Mar 28. Red-head: in the River at Watertown Mar 1 and remained several days. Canvasback: 3 at Tibbets Pt Jan 20. Scaup: a few in the river at Watertown. Common Goldeneye: in Black River at Watertown, max 13. Bufflehead: 2 in Watertown Feb 3. Hooded Merganser: a male in Watertown from late Dec to middle of Jan; at Black Lake Jan 24.

**Hawks — Owls:** Red-tailed Hawk: first, Mar 10. Rough-legged Hawk: Belknap reports a max count of 14, Jan 9 and 13, Jan 29; numbers decreased in Feb, but scattered birds were seen nearly every day, but only a few in Mar; Last, near Dexter Mar 29. This year they were seen southwest of Watertown and north to the Theresa section. They were not seen often near Pt. Peninsula where they were so numerous a year ago. Coot: One, in river at Watertown Dec-Jan, stayed there nearly three weeks. Killdeer: came a little late and were not seen until late Mar. Great Black-backed Gull: Two, in Watertown in late Dec and in Jan. Herring Gull: several in river at Watertown until late Jan. Snowy Owl: two, at Pt. Peninsula Dec 2 and a few others reported, but numbers down greatly from last year. Hawk-Owl: Three seen — Dec 20 near Potsdam in St. Lawrence County (Cerwonka); Jan 4 between Fargo and Natural Bridge, Jefferson Co. (Dye); and Feb 8 at Sears Pond, Lewis Co. (Gordon). Saw-whet Owl: near Potsdam, no doubt the snow made it hard for small owls to find food. Short-eared Owl: Dec 16 Sackets Harbor; Feb 9 in Watertown, Mar 29 near Perch River.

**Woodpeckers — Shrikes:** Black-backed Woodpecker: Dec 2 near Henderson. Phoebe: Mar 28. Horned Lark: seen in Mar, but less common this year. Mocking-

bird: Dec 2 east of Chaumont (Spofford). Bluebird: a Male near Felts Mills Mar 19 and one near Adams late in Mar. Northern Shrike: a few seen this winter.

**Blackbirds — Sparrows:** Meadowlark: first, in Watertown Mar 17. Red-winged Blackbird: at Calcium Dec 15; near Watertown Dec 20 and Mar 17. Common Grackle: Watertown Mar 16. Brown-headed Cowbird; Watertown Mar 10. Cardinal: about as many as last year. Evening Grosbeak: Very few until Feb; they appeared at Potsdam about Feb 1; in Watertown a week later, becoming numerous in late Feb and most of Mar, but decreasing somewhat in numbers at the end of Mar. In most flocks there were 5-6 times as many females as males. Among the ones trapped for banding less than 20% were males. An albino appeared several times at three feeders near Watertown. Purple Finch: numerous at many feeders over much of this region in Mar. Seen at Adams Center, Lowville, Watertown, Canton and Potsdam. Redpoll: 15 at Deferiet Mar 16, but very few seen. Pine Siskin: seen less often than Purple Finches, but still more common than in any recent year. Goldfinch: Mar 3 at Canton. Slate-colored Junco: 3 at a feeder in Adams Center most of Feb-Mar. Fox Sparrow: in Watertown late Mar. Snow Bunting: several flocks in Dec, less common in Jan and few or none after the middle of Jan.

173 Haley St., Watertown

## REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK - CHAMPLAIN

THOMAS A. LESPERANCE

It is now universally known about the winter just endured and to remark about it here, when it is best forgotten, would be like adding fuel to a dying fire. Bird life as far as activity was concerned came to a standstill in most areas. A few secluded spots did produce some exceptional winter residents, which should have wintered south of here, but even these hardy individuals no doubt succumbed to the icy blasts before it was over. Total accumulations at higher elevations were reported to have been 182 inches while along Lake Champlain it was measured at 70 inches. Snow which fell in the middle of December was still on the ground by mid March. All in all it was, in most cases, a total loss birdwise until the first weeks of March when the first migrants began to appear.

Abbreviations: A — Amstutz; HD — H. Delafield; D — Delahanty; K — Keji; TL — Lesperance; L — lake; R — River; thru — throughout.

**Loons — Ducks:** Great Blue Heron: one, Mar 29-30, Tupper L, (D); one, Mar 30, Sunmount (A). Black Duck: two, Saranac R, Jan 20, fewer than usual, none on Christmas count (HD). Common Goldeneye: few, Tupper L and Ausable R (as long as water remained open). Bufflehead: Tupper L. Common Merganser: Tupper L and Ausable R.

**Hawks — Owls:** Bald Eagle: one, Feb 19 (A); one, Mar 25, Tupper L. (D); several reported by various individuals near Willsboro Point on L. Champlain. Sparrow Hawk: returned by Mar 25 (HD). Usually a winter resident in most of the region but not reported this winter. Ruffed Grouse: apparently normal, but hard to see on account of snow depth (HD). Killdeer: two, Mar 27, on L. Champlain ice, at Westport (HD); Mar 30, Saranac L (HD); one, Mar 30, shore of Tupper L (A). Herring Gull: three, Mar 27, on ice at Westport, L. Champlain. Saw-whet Owl: one, Raybrook, Jan 25 (K). Barred Owl: common in the Keeseville area. Screech Owl: two (one red and one grey phase) along Peru Rd.

**Goatsuckers — Shrikes:** Belted Kingfisher: one, Jan 8 to 30 nr Powerhouse at Ray Brook (K). Pileated Woodpecker: one or two seen at intervals on Forest Home and McKenzie Pond Rds, Saranac L (HD). Red-headed Woodpecker: one, Chateauguay (John Hotchkiss, fide B. P. Burtt) this is a most unusual record since it occurred Christmas week. Hairy Woodpecker: normal (HD); common in areas where seen. Downy Woodpecker: not as common as Hairy (HD); common in areas where seen (TL). Eastern Phoebe: Mar 27, Westport Station (HD). Horned Lark: E.a. alpestris mixed with E.a. practicola common in expected areas, some with Snow Bunting, others with Tree Sparrows and Juncos (TL). Very few reports due to deep snow, few

at Normans Ridge, Mar 14, 16 (HD). Blue Jay: fine comeback after the dearth last winter, often ten to 13 at our feeder (HD). Common Crow: one or two at intervals thru period, back in numbers Mar 27 (HD). Black-capped Chickadee: normal (HD). Boreal Chickadee: more in evidence than usual (HD). White and Red-breasted Nuthatches: common in areas where seen (TL); normal (HD). Brown Creeper: common in most areas (TL); two on count day, one Jan 12 and Feb 27 (HD). Robin: reports of single birds at L. Placid and Saranac L. thru period (HD); some wintered, these were very light colored, and fed on dried and frozen berries or at small springs where the edges did not freeze. Main arrival, Mar 10 (TL). Hermit Thrush: one, Jan 8 and 12; Ray Brook (K, fide HD). Golden-crowned Kinglet: Mar 20, Ray Brook (K). Cedar Waxwing: one, Mar 20, Tupper L. (Mrs. Martin). Loggerhead Shrike: one, Feb 27 and Mar 28, Saranac L. (HD). Northern Shrike: one, Jan 5, 9 & 10, Tupper L. (D). Starling: Flock, Saranac L all winter, numbers back by late Mar (HD).

**Vireos — Sparrows:** Myrtle Warbler: one, (heard), Mar 31, L. Placid cutoff (HD). House Sparrow: reports show increase in range and numbers (HD). Eastern Meadowlark: one, Mar 25 (D). Red-winged Blackbird: two, Tupper L, all winter (D); one or two at intervals during winter, Saranac L, first migrants, Mar 17, 45, Mar 26 (HD). Common Grackle: migrants began to appear Mar 20 (TL); Saranac L, Mar 25 (HD). Brown-headed Cowbird: three wintered Tupper L (D); five wintered Ray Brook (K); one at feeder all winter (Dr. J. Heins); one or two reported thru period, Saranac L, (HD), migrants began to appear Mar 20 (TL); 48, Mar 26 (HD). Evening Grosbeaks: large numbers after last season's dearth (we used over 225 lbs of sunflower seed) (HD); present in great numbers (TL). Purple Finch: up in numbers, the only bright spot of the long winter (TL); greatest numbers since 1959, which was also a snowy winter; flocks of 30-50 at feeder in Feb, thinning out by mid-Mar (HD). Common Redpoll: reports on Jan 2 and others at intervals during period, 16, Mar 16 (HD); one report on Peru Rd nr Plattsburgh, late Mar (TL). Pine Siskin: small scattered flocks, numbers seemed down (TL); good to large numbers from Dec 12 on, lessening by mid-Mar (HD). Amer. Goldfinch: three, Dec 12, Saranac L, present in small numbers thru period (HD). Red Crossbill: Ray Brook, Dec 5 thru Jan 29 (K); one, dead, Keeseville (TL); pair, Mar 31, L. Placid cutoff (HD). White-winged Crossbill: one Mar 17, Sunmount (A); small numbers thru period Saranac L until Mar 16 (HD). Slate-colored Junco: Mar 31 (my first), Saranac L, other reports three or four days earlier (HD). Tree Sparrow: occasional reports of small numbers thru period (HD). Savannah Sparrow: Mar 27, Tupper L (D). White-throated: 'most of winter' Ray Brook (K). Song: well established, Mar 30, Tupper L (D); two, Mar 27, Westport and Mar 30, Saranac L (HD). Snow Bunting: decidedly fewer than 1961-62 probably due to deep snow (HD).

Keeseville

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## REGION 8 — MOHAWK - HUDSON

PETER P. WICKHAM

This winter was unusually severe. After a few warm days in early December, the latter part of the month was cold enough to average  $23.0^{\circ}$  in temperature ( $3.5^{\circ}$  below average) at Albany. Average temperatures at Albany in January and February were  $20.3^{\circ}$  and  $17.2^{\circ}$  ( $2.4^{\circ}$  and  $6.5^{\circ}$  below normal means, respectively.) Snowfall was about average, except during January, when twice the usual amount fell. March averaged close to normal in temperature, with precipitation almost an inch above normal for the month. The last week of the month was above average in temperature, and a noticeable influx of migrant occurred during the week.

In contrast to last winter, very few unusual species appeared. The hawk population seemed low, and finches (particularly in the first half of the winter) were in low numbers. On the other hand, high populations of some of the more common species — especially Blue Jays, Mourning Doves, and Tree Sparrows — were noted. Flocks of ground-feeding birds — e.g., Horned Larks, Snow Buntings and Longspurs — seemed much larger and more widely distributed than usual. Unusual species reported

included Blue Goose, Gadwall, Glaucous Gull, Oregon Junco, Blue Grosbeak, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Chestnut-collared Longspur.

Abbreviations used: Alan Devoe Bird Club — ADBC; Schenectady Bird Club — SBC; Greene County Bird Club — GCBC; Black Creek Marshes — BCM; br — breasted; com — common; I — Island; L — Lake; Nisk — Niskayuna; nr — near; pk — park; pr — pair; R — River; Sar — Saratoga; Sch — Schenectady; thr — throated; Visch Fy — Vischer Ferry; WW — Widewaters; Cr — Creek; Res — Reservoir; Sta — Station; Tomh — Tomhannock.

Observers: Gus Angst — GA; Pauline Baker — PB; Thomas & Arlene Brown — TB, AB; Lee Burland — LB; James & Barbara Bush — JHB, BB; Eleanor Byrne — EBB; Juanita Cook — JC; Hazel Eddy — HE; Paul & Georgia Erlenbach — PE, GE; Mabel French — MWF; John Fuller — JF; Esly Hallenbeck — EH; Vernon Haskins — VH; Betty Hicks — BH; Marcia Kent — MK; Mary Kilcawley — MKil; Howard & Muriel Munson — HM, MM; Dr. W. Myers — WM; John & Eloise Payne — JP, EP; Eleanor Radke — ER; Edgar M. Reilly, Jr. — EMR; Walton Sabin — WBS; Benton Seguin — BRS; Jane Silvernail — JS; Robert & Mary Lou Shedd — RS, MLS; Myra Smilow — MS; Walter Smith — WSm; Catherine Thorne — CT; Henry Thurston — HT; Donald Tucker — DJT; Beverly Waite — BW; Peter Wickham — PPW.

**Loons — Ducks:** Com Loon: last, Dec 8, Sar L (EH, PPW). Red-necked Grebe: one, Mar 30, Lock 7, Sch (DJT). Horned Grebe: last, Dec 8, Sar L (EH, PPW). One was picked up in fresh condition inland at Durham Feb 19 (VH) and presented to the State Museum; perhaps this bird was leaving frozen Lake Ontario. Pied-bill Grebe: first, Mar 22 Hudson R nr Troy (PPW). Great Blue Heron: one, Dec 29, flying south nr Kinderhook (LB, JC); one, returning, Mar 25 at Stockport Sta (HT), preceding a general movement into the area the latter days of the month. Green Heron: one was reported from Old Chatham on the astonishingly early date of Mar 7 (EMR). American Bittern: one on a Castleton lawn Mar 12 (JC) was extremely early — no others reported during the period. Canada Goose: first, Mar 17 Stockport Sta (ADBC); many flocks were reported over the latter half of the month. Blue Goose: seven were in a field nr Schodack Center Mar 28 (LB). American Widgeon: first Mar 24 at Stockport Sta (HT). Pintail: one-female, wintered at Green I (SBC); first spring migrants Mar 25 at Stockport Sta (HT) and Mar 26 at BCM (RS, MLS). Gadwall: one pr were at Stony Cr Res Mar 30 (BRS). Green-winged Teal: Mar 26, BCM (RS, MLS) and Mar 27, Nisk WW (PPW) first reports. Blue-winged Teal: earliest at Lock 7, Sch, Mar 30 (DJT). Wood Duck: one pr, Mar 11, Meadowdale (BW); others appeared two weeks later. Redhead: no reports. Ring-necked Duck: migrating north in large numbers, first Mar 27 at Stockport Sta (ER) and at Nisk WW (PPW). Canvasback: two were on the Hudson R nr Troy Jan 19 (SBC); early migrants appeared Mar 27 and 30 at Stockport Sta (ADBC). Scap: a few reappeared on the Hudson R nr Troy after the hunting season (and the Christmas Count): two females were at Green I Jan 19 (SBC) and ten were near Troy Feb 24 (SBC). Early migrants appeared Mar 27 (PPW) and thereafter. One flock at Lock 7, Mar 30, was definitely identified as Greater (DJT). Bufflehead: four were at Sar L until Dec 8 (PPW, EH); no more were seen until Mar 24 at Lock 7 (DJT). Hooded Merganser: a female was in the same locality nr Cohoes Dec 29 (SBC) as one observed in Dec 1961. A small group were migrating up the Hudson R nr New Baltimore Mar 17 (WBS). Red-br Merganser: first report, two on the Mohawk R nr Cohoes Mar 30 (BRS).

**Hawks — Owls:** Turkey Vulture: a very early bird appeared Mar 7 over E. Greenbush (MS). Others were reported from several areas during the last week of Mar. Goshawk: Individuals were at New Concord Jan 1 (ER) and nr Reichard's L through Feb and early Mar (fide PPW). Both Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks were reported throughout period in low numbers, with the latter predominating. A Red-shouldered Hawk at New Concord Jan 25 (ER) is the only record for Jan and Feb; an adult observed at Kiskatom Mar 17 (WBS) was probably returning. Rough-legged Hawk: widely reported throughout period, but few were present in any one area. Bald Eagle: one, Feb 17 at Catskill (Traver) the only report. Marsh Hawk: only a few reports. Osprey: first Mar 24, Chatham Center (JS). Peregrine Falcon: singles reported Dec 29 nr Tomh (SBC), Feb 6 and Mar 16 at Meadowdale (EH).

Wild Turkey: a flock of 12 Feb 6 nr Lexington (MK) the sole report. Coot: a single bird remained on Tomh Res until at least Jan 26 (PPW). It is not known whether the bird wintered successfully. Returning birds appeared Mar 25 at BCM (RS, MLS) and Mar 31 at Coxsackie (CT). Killdeer were reported at Thacher Park Dec 22 (SBC) and along the Hudson R nr Troy Jan 5 (EBB). Early migrants appeared Mar 9 at Lawrenceville (JHB) and nr Kinderhook (PPW). Woodcock: arrived in a marked wave Mar 25-26 (WSm). Com Snipe: one wintered at Meadowdale (SBC). Migrants were observed Mar 24 at Castleton (JC) and thereafter. Glaucous Gull: a second year bird was observed carefully at Nisk WW Mar 30 (BRS). Great Black-backed Gull: two, Mar 9 nr Stuyvesant (PPW) preceded a widespread movement into the area the latter part of the month. Herring Gull: four, Mar 8 nr Troy (BH) and 60, Mar 9 at Stuyvesant and Albany (PPW), the first spring migrants. One-three appeared irregularly in the Troy area during the winter (SBC). Ring-billed Gull: appeared with Herring Gulls Mar 9 (PPW) and thereafter. Numbers of both species built up rapidly in late Mar, with 800-1000 at Visch Fy the last week in Mar. Bonaparte's Gull: a flock of 22, Sar L, Dec 8 (PPW) may have been there as a result of a storm just previous. Mourning Dove: wintered in very large numbers. Several flocks of 50-150 were seen, and feeder reports were widespread. Barred Owl: reported Feb 2 at Westerlo (MK), Feb 15 at Livingston (HM, MM) and Mar 1 at Hudson (TB, AB). Barn Owl: one was flying over a field nr Kinderhook Feb 10 (PE, GE). Snowy Owl: no reports from this area this winter. Short-eared Owl: one was at Voorheesville in Feb (BW et al) and three-four in Albany in Feb and early Mar (fide WBS).

**Goatsuckers — Shrikes:** Kingfisher: Dec 22 at Sch (SBC) and Jan 6 and 20 at Collins L outlet (EH), the only winter records. First spring report, Mar 17 at Kiskatom (GCBC). Flicker: one or more wintering birds were at Red Rock, Troy, Meadowdale, Guilderland, and Colonie. Returning individuals appeared Mar 23 (SBC) and thereafter. Sapsucker: one, Mar 30 at Nisk (GA) was early. Northern Three-toed Woodpecker: one, at Sch Dec 22 (SBC) may have been the same one reported in the last issue. Phoebe: two, Dec 22 on the Schenectady Christmas Count were outstanding (SBC). Returning birds appeared Mar 24 at Stockport Sta (HT) and widely thereafter. Horned Lark: large flocks of 100-1000 birds frequently seen, particularly in Feb and Mar. Single and paired birds were singing about what may have been their nesting territories on Feb 9 (PPW, JF). Tree Swallow: first, Mar 16 at Castleton (JC). Tufted Titmouse: many reports of wintering birds. Black-capped Chickadee: a white-headed partially albino chickadee reappeared at a feeder in Westerlo where it had spent the previous winter (MK). Winter Wren: several were reported wintering, with single birds at Troy, Scotia and Waterford, and four at Durham. Carolina Wren: no reports. Mockingbird: single birds wintered at Hudson, Delmar, Guilderland and Old Chatham. Brown Thrasher: one, at a feeder nr W. Sand L Dec 13-16 (fide WBS). Hermit Thrush: one Feb 11 at a feeder nr Sch the only individual reported (fide HE). Bluebird: reports of wintering birds from Ghent, Visch Fy, and Meadowdale. Appeared in many other areas the last week in Mar. Pipit: a flock of at least six at Meadowdale Mar 26 (BW) was the first report. Northern Shrike: several reports: Dec 22, Meadowdale and Dec 29, nr Troy (SBC); Jan 18 and Feb 15-28, New Concord (ER); Feb 7, Westerlo (MK); and four reports from different areas during Mar which may indicate a migrational movement.

**Vireos — Sparrows:** No warblers were reported. Meadowlark: several wintered in protected areas; migrants arrived the last week of Mar. Red-winged Blackbird: a group of four wintered at Claverack (HT) and a group of 3 to 17 appeared regularly at a dump in Scotia (EH). Single birds were reported from New Concord, Canaan, and Rensselaer. First migrants appeared Mar 5 nr Castleton (PPW) but there was no real influx until Mar 8-9, when they appeared suddenly in many places in flocks as large as 200. Baltimore Oriole: one was at a feeder in Troy until Dec 18 (fide MKil). Rusty Blackbird: one was at a New Concord feeder during Feb (ER) and a flock of 4-8 was present with the Redwings in Scotia through the winter (EH). Flocks of 10-35 observed Mar 30-31 were clearly spring migrants. Com Grackle: a partially albino grackle at a Claverack feeder (HT) was the only report for the winter following the Christmas Counts. Spring migrants followed a pattern almost identical with that of the Redwings. Cowbird: a few single birds

and small flocks were observed during the winter. Returning birds appeared Mar 8 at Kiskatom (WSm) and Mar 9 at Nisk (HE) and Loudonville (MWF). Cardinal: a common bird in many areas, with 39 reported on the Troy Christmas Count, more than double any previous record (SBC). Rose-br Grosbeak: three in female or imm plumage seen Feb 6 feeding with a Robin in some cedar trees near Athens (JHB, BB) were unprecedented. Blue Grosbeak: one-four birds were still present in Catskill in Dec and early Feb by at least three observers (WM, JHB, BB). Evening Grosbeak: scarce in early winter, but large flocks formed in Feb and Mar. Purple Finch: became quite widely reported in Feb and Mar. Pine Grosbeak: quite scarce, with only six records scattered throughout the area of flocks and single birds from Jan 9 to Mar 14. Redpoll: a flock of 65 nr Durham during Feb (VH) constitutes the only report. Pine Siskin: after a virtual absence early in the winter, large numbers appeared in all areas during Mar. Red Crossbill: four, Dec 15 at L George (WBS, PPW), a small flock at Old Chatham Dec 28 (EMR) and three at Tomh Res Mar 31 (PPW) the only records. Towhee: two wintered at Scotia (EH). Vesper Sparrow: last, Dec 12, Catskill (JHB); no winter reports. Oregon Junco: one appeared Jan 12 in Colonie (JF) at a feeder where one had appeared the previous winter; two appeared at a Slingerlands feeder (BW); and one was observed Jan 7 at a Nisk feeder and infrequently thereafter (HE). Field Sparrow: two late birds were in Catskill Dec 29 (GCBC). None were observed during the winter. First spring migrants appeared Mar 28 at Ghent (PE, GE) and Mar 30 at Meadowdale (RS, MLS). White-throated Sparrow: a few birds wintered in protected areas. Chipping Sparrow: recorded Dec 22 at Sch (SBC) and Dec 29 at Catskill (GCBC). Fox Sparrow: early individuals were seen Mar 7 at Kiskatom (WSm) and Mar 17 at Catskill (WBS) before a marked wave Mar 25-26. Swamp Sparrow: possible wintering birds were nr Sch Dec 22 (SBC) and Tomh Res (PPW) Jan 5. Migrants returned to Visch Fy Mar 31 (EH). Lapland Longspur: a very large number reported, with the largest flock 20-40 nr Kinderhook during Feb and early Mar (ADBC). Chestnut-collared Longspur: two individuals in winter plumage were observed carefully and the distinctive tail pattern noted by two competent observers Feb 14 and 21 with the large flock of Lapland Longspur previously noted (HT, EMR). Snow Bunting: these appeared in large numbers in many areas, with the largest flock reported approx 1000 at Slingerlands Jan 15 (BW, MLS).

Box 465A, RFD #4, Troy

#### Addendum:

Record of Bald Eagles seen in Northern New York State by John Schempp, a Survey Pilot for the Conservation Dept. as reported to Dr. Paul P. Wickham (fide Walton B. Sabin): —

January 14; two adults, Lake Champlain (Region 7)

January 16; five adults and two juveniles, on the ice in St. Lawrence River between Ogdensburg and Alexandria Bay (over about a 25 mile stretch of the river) (Region 6).

Ed: Since this report concerns two other Regions and to keep it intact, I am adding it to Dr. Wickham's report of Region 8.

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## REGION 9 — DELAWARE - HUDSON

EDWARD D. TREACY

The winter of 1962-63 was so constant in its weather conditions that one got the impression it would never end. Fred Hough sums it up well in his report: "The cold winter temperatures set in during December and remained consistently stable until latter March. The first snowfall of December remained and because of the temperature stability most subsequent falls remained too, and built upon one another. For this area there was never a great amount of snowfall in any one storm. It was not a winter of extreme temperatures or precipitation. Winter let go and spring came in nicely during the last week of March."

In general it was a fair season for birding; with a better than average for accidentals. Ducks were down in numbers largely due to the ice which arrived early, and was unyielding through to late March. Northern finches were definitely off this

winter, with scattered reports of Grosbeak, Siskin, etc. A marked increase in numbers of these species was noted in most parts during the first half of March. The spring migration got off to a poor start with a number of species arriving late for no apparent reason, and was picking up rather well at the close of the period.

Abbreviations used: First four letters of each county — ex. Rock — Rockland County; MBC — Mearns Bird Club; WBC — Waterman Bird Club.

Contributors: BA — Bob Augustine; EB — Elsie Brown; EBU — Enid Butler; FC — F. Cummings; ID — Iris Dean; GD — George Decker; RFD — Robert F. Deed; BD — Betty Deul; ME — Martha Earl; DE — Douglas Eckels; LF — L. Fay; FG — Florence Germond; Dr.MH — Dr. Marjorie Hopper; FH — Fred Hough; PJ — Paul Jeheber; BL — Brother Leo; ML — Mabel Little; DL — D. Lloyd; HM — Mrs. Harold McLoughlin; RO — Ralph Odell; EP — Eleanor Pink; FR — F. Ramsey; HS — Herb Small; MV — Marion Van Wagner; OW — Otis Waterman; BW — Bradford Whiting.

**Loons — Ducks:** Common Loon: First spring record Mar 31 at Carmel, Putn (ML). This is late but consistent with the late spring thaw. Red-necked Grebe: Our only record for the season a single bird on the Hudson Riv. at Grand View, Rock. Mar 10 (RFD). Horned Grebe: One of those unique occasions when one was found in a farm yard at Oxford, Oran on Jan 27 and turned over to Martha Earl. She released it unharmed on the Hudson R. next day. Pied-billed Grebe: Made their first appearance throughout the region on Mar 23. Great Blue Heron: A few winter reports where water remained open; Dec 15 in West, and Feb. 25 in Rock. Ducks: Our poorest year for the annual waterfowl census. Only twelve species reported which was our next to lowest count, and the lowest number of individuals ever reported. Probably a combination of poor weather, too much ice, and too few people in the field. Canada Goose: An unusual date of Dec 2 for about 100 birds at Hawthorne, West (BA). Spring migrants arrived Mar 6 in West; Mar 9 in Dutch and Mar 25 in Oran. Snow Goose: A flock of 50 birds at Crugars Is., Dutch on Mar 30 (MBC). Mallard: A patch of unfrozen water at the Rockland Light and Power Plant in Monroe, Oran brought the number of mallards to five times last year's count on the waterfowl census. Numbers were well down throughout the rest of the region. Black Duck: Our lowest count in nine years, and one tenth the number that was found last year. Pintail: Fifteen birds on the Hudson R. on Mar 16 (WBC) is an exceptionally high number for this region. Green-winged Teal: One bird from Dutch on annual waterfowl census, but three birds observed throughout much of the winter at Blooming Grove, Oran (ME). Blue-winged Teal: Mar 15 at Congers Lake, Rock (Dr.MH); a new early date for that county. Wood Duck: Only one bird on annual census. Migrants arrived Mar 16 in Dutch, but not till Mar 26 in Oran, and Mar 28 and 30 in West. Redhead: Four birds remained on Lake Gleneida, Putn until it froze in early Jan (ML). Ring-necked Duck: Winter numbers lower than usual. Heavy flights reported from Dutch from Mar 24 on to end of period (WBC). Cinnamon-back: 30 birds at Crugars Is., Dutch on Mar 30. (WBC). This is the most birds of this species seen at one time for the past several years. Common Golden-eye: More abundant than they have been for the past several years. Red-breasted Merganser: One on the Hudson R. at Fort Montgomery on Dec 29 (PJ). Five on the Hudson R. in Dutch on Mar 16 (WBC).

**Hawks — Owls:** Turkey Vulture: Returned to Oran Mar 8, West Mar 14, and Dutch Mar 18. Goshawk: A number of reports. Most interesting that of an immature male killed by hitting a picture window at the home of Vernon Boles in Katonah, West on Feb 9. Sharp-shinned Hawk: No reports. Cooper's Hawk: No reports. Red-tailed Hawk: Numbers definitely down throughout region. Sam B. Phelps Jr. of Walden, Oran reports success in finally luring a Red-tailed to a platform feeder in his farm yard. After three years of trying, he has had the bird taking meat scraps regularly. Red-shouldered Hawk: Numbers appeared to be normal. Rough-legged Hawk: Reports of average to better than average numbers. Bob Deed noted them to be more common than the Red-tailed on the North Jersey Meadows just south of our region. Bald Eagle: Seems to be less each year. National Audubon Count yielded none, but at least ten birds were reported as wintering, with six of them immatures. Marsh Hawk: Only one winter record; that in Dutch Jan 29 (BW). First migrant at Blooming Grove Mar 21 (ME). Osprey: Two over Bashee Kill, Oran, on Mar 28 (ID). Sparrow Hawk: Very few reported from Dutch (OW); down in numbers

in Oran (ME); and none observed this winter in Putn (ML). Virginio Rail: One wintering bird in Dutch was found in a Muskrat trap Jan 16 (BW), and three wintered in the Hawthorne area of West (BA). Killdeer: Wintered sparingly throughout much of region. Woodcock: Earliest date Mar 8, a bird in courtship at Shrub Oak, West (ROC). Common Snipe: Wintering records from Dutch and Oran. Migrants appeared in Blooming Grove, Oran on Mar 11 and a bird was observed in courtship flight there on Mar 25 (ME). **White-winged Gulls:** Normally very rare, this was the best year in memory for both Glaucous and Iceland Gulls. The former was reported all along the Hudson through our region, and the latter was reported from Dutch at Beacon, one bird on Mar 23 (WBC); and from West at Croton Point, six birds on Jan 26 (RO). Great Black-backed Gull: Wintered in moderate numbers. Increased greatly during Mar (WBC). **Lesser Black-backed Gull:** A bird of this species was first observed on Nov 27 at Croton Pt., West and was observed again on Dec 2 by many West birders (BA). Mourning Dove: Numbers half as numerous in Dutch this year as compared with last. Owls: An excellent season for owls. Most species represented, with some unusually fine observations. Dutch reports several individuals of Screech, Saw-whet and Long-eared species found in starved condition during the latter part of Feb and early Mar. Screech Owl: Many reports from most areas. Horned Owl: Many reports esp. from West. Snowy Owl: Two reported; one on Dec 28 at West Point (FR), and the other on Jan 7 along Old Storm King Road in east Oran (FC). Barred Owl: Same as Horned. Long-eared Owl: Sarah Uyhelyhi of Chester, Oran had a bird of this species on the railing of her back porch for more than an hour and fifteen minutes on Jan 28. Short-eared Owl: Only two reported, both from Dutch. Saw-whet Owl: two reported from Dutch; two from Ulst; one from West; and a remarkable record of one studied by flashlight on the back porch of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Steffans of New City, Rock on Jan 1.

**Goatsuckers — Shrikes:** Belted Kingfisher: Icing conditions caused very few reports. Flicker: Few reports throughout season. Waves reported Mar 25 Oran, Mar 26 West, and Mar 30 Dutch. Pileated Woodpecker: Numbers seem to have increased. Margaret Dye reports them at suet feeders in various locations of Cornwall all winter, but no details are given on this unusual behavior. **Red-bellied Woodpecker:** The bird reported last fall at Monroe, Oran remained until Jan 31. Mrs. Jessup at whose home the bird fed, reported that she felt the bird may have died since it slept for long periods of time throughout the day for the last few days that she observed it; something it did not do previously. Another of this species was reported at Stanfordville, Dutch (BD) from Dec 26 to the end of the period; and another at Garnerville, Rock on Jan 2 and from Feb 8 to the end of the month. This made the third record for Rock. Red-headed Woodpecker: One imm. male reported at a Dutch feeder from Jan 27 to the end of the period (FG). Martha Earl reports their having maintained good numbers in central Oran. Sapsucker: Four reports from Rock, but none elsewhere. **Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker:** Two, both in West. One female reported on the Peekskill Christmas count, and a male on Dec 15 at Valhallo (BA, DE). The latter remained till Mar 3 and was observed by many. Phoebe: Arrived generally in area on Mar 9, 10 and 11. Horned Lark: Scarce in early winter but numbers increased to average or above during Mar. Tree Swallow: Arriving in area Mar 26 (Oran, West and Sull) and Mar 28 (Ulst). Blue Jay: Normal winter population. **Raven:** A bird on Mar 26 at Shrub Oak, West (RO). Crow: Wintered in large numbers. One roost near Poughkeepsie had about 5600 and another near Beacon was large but uncounted. Several hundred were observed roosting at Monroe, Oran, and many other reports were received. Fish-Crow: Two reported in Mar at a dump in Beacon, Dutch (GD, MV). Chickadee: Black-capped maintained normal to better numbers, but Boreal were unreported; a marked contrast to last year's invasion. Nuthatch: White-breasted were normal in numbers, but Red-breasted were only sparsely reported; at least five from West, two from Dutch, and two from Rock. Wrens: There were the usual reports of Winter Wrens, but the Carolina which was so low last winter has recovered with as many as three wintering at one feeder in Cornwall, Oran (PJ). Mimids: Mockingbirds were reported from all their previous locations, and continue to increase in numbers. Brown Thrashers were widely reported with wintering numbers better than usual. No Catbirds were reported. Robin: Wintered in usual numbers; first migrant flocks noted Mar 7 in West, Mar 9 in Oran, and Mar 10 in Dutch. **Varied Thrush:** This accidental arrived

at the home of Leroy Brown in Tarrytown, West on Jan 1 and remained until the 26th. A careful identification was made, and a number of competent observers saw the bird. It is not the first record for this species in West. Hermit Thrush: A number of winter records, one of a bird remaining thru Jan, Feb, and half of Mar at the home of Fred Hough in Accord, Ulst. Bluebird: Winter numbers constant for past several years. Kinglets: Both species well represented in Dutch, and Oran, but not mentioned by other reporters. Pipit: One winter report on Dec 1 at Croton Pt West (BA). Only spring report one flock at Barrytown, Dutch. Mar 25 (BL). Northern Shrike: Four reports, all from Dutch. None after Jan 27.

**Vireos — Warblers:** Warblers: Two very late records from West. A Parula Warbler struck a picture window in Portchester on **Dec 13**; and a Palm Warbler was observed in Hawthorne on **Dec 1** (BA). Myrtle Warbler: At least five were in the Hawthorne area during Dec and the only other reports were of two birds in the Dutch area. One of the latter birds fed daily on a honey and water solution from Dec 15 to Feb 19 (DL). Meadowlark: Scarce in Dutch, but normal throughout rest of region. Redwing: Two wintered in Dutch; and four other birds were reported from Ulst in the northern part of the region where they are quite rare in winter. Migrants appeared early in March as usual and passed through in large flocks. Rusty Blackbird: Flocks of up to 20 birds wintered in Dutch and West. Migrants arrived on Mar 22 and 23 throughout region. Grackle: Winter records more numerous than usual. No Feb migrants noted; arrived about two weeks later than usual, about Mar 8. Cardinal: Numbers better than usual, as many as 20 birds at some feeders. **Indigo Bunting:** An astounding but well documented record of two males with some blue in the wings and two females or immatures at Herb Saltford's home in Dutch from **Dec 11 to 15**. Dickcissel: Two Dutch records, Nov 25 (MV) and Nov 29 (EB); and one Oran, Dec 16 (LF). Evening Grosbeak: Reports from all areas. Scarce throughout early and mid-winter. Numbers increased greatly during Mar. Purple Finch: A phenomenal increase after Mar 1. Relatively scarce in early winter. House Finch: Well established in Hawthorne area of West throughout winter (BA), and two pair resident at Dr. Marjorie Hooper's home in Upper Nyack, Rock. from Nov 5 thru Mar 15. Pine Grosbeak: Absent from Sull, Ulst and Dutch; and only single birds reported from Oran, Rock and West. Largest flock reported was eight birds in Putn (ML). **European Goldfinch:** A bird observed at the home of Mrs. J. R. Adams in Chappaqua and photographed by Mr. Adams. First appeared Nov 13 and was last seen on Dec 31 (BA). Redpoll: Not much more numerous than the Pine Grosbeak. Small flocks and single birds reported from most areas however. Pine Siskin: Same status as Redpoll. Goldfinch: Large numbers reported throughout entire region. Red Crossbill: An immature spent the month of Dec and half of Jan at the home of M. Scandrett in Cornwall, Oran. Last reported Jan 17. White-winged Crossbill: A few reported from Sull, Oran and West. First report Feb 16 at Cornwall; last Mar 22 at Chappaqua. Towhee: More reports than usual in Rock, occasionally more than one bird at a time. Few noted elsewhere. Savannah Sparrow: Two winter records in Dutch; one in Dec. (EP) and another from Feb 15 to the end of the period (EBu). Migrants arrived on the early date of Mar 29 at Kripplebush, Ulst (FH). Vesper Sparrow: Reported three times in Dutch and four times in Oran. Oregon Junco: Two records for Dutch, three for West and one from Rock. Tree Sparrow: Numbers normal to above. **White-crowned Sparrow:** One Dec 22 in Dutch (EP), and another spent the month of Jan in Ulst (HS). Fox Sparrow: The usual winter records; sparingly throughout much of region except Rock where numbers seemed to be better than usual. Migrants were passing through during the second week of Mar. Swamp Sparrow: Wintering birds reported in Dutch and Oran. Song Sparrow: Usual wintering birds, more scarce in Dutch. Lapland Longspur: Dutch reports one on Dec 28 (MV) and three Jan 18 (HM). Snow Bunting: Numbers lighter than last year throughout much of region. Martha Earl, however, reports her best year for this species since 1959. Gladys Hall had a bird at her feeder in the village of Washingtonville from Dec 11 throughout the winter. No birds of this species reported after Mar 12.

Pellwood Lake, Highland Falls

## REGION 10 — MARINE

JOHN J. ELLIOTT

December came in rather mild with a few lingering warblers and some hardy species. As the month progressed cold weather set in and by the latest Christmas Census, December 31, taken by the South Nassau group on a cold, very windy day, although some 110 species were counted, numbers were down in many species to single individuals. As winter progressed a great scarcity of small birds was noted.

February was the coldest since 1958. On 25 of February's 28 days the temperature dropped to 23 degrees or lower and rose to the freezing point on only ten days. March came in rather mild in comparison and record heat was reported for one day by the end of the month.

Spring migration of Redwings and Cowbirds and Grackles came through in early March, late for the normal February advances northward. Savannah, Fox, Song and Vesper Sparrows were very scarce along the outer beach.

The duck census came through in a normal fashion with practically the same dependable observers carrying it through up to its ninth year. Much appreciation is given to the 66 observers in the completion of the 1963 Waterfowl Count for Region 10. A sad note came a month or so after the census in the announcement of the death of Edward J. Whelen, dominant leader and past president of the Brooklyn Bird Club. Ed directed the most extensive waterfowl count of all areas with a good experienced group of his faithful club. This included Rockaway Point and Brooklyn, East River, Upper and Lower Bays, all of Staten Island and the Hudson River on the Manhattan waterfront. He will be greatly missed. The 1963 census total was 140,-821-118,718 for Long Island and 22,103 for New York city, including lower Westchester, the Bronx, Brooklyn and Staten Island. As to the weather: a cold, windy spell ushered in the New Year followed by a milder period with rain on both weekends of the waterfowl count. The number of Mute Swans was away up. Normally in the 600's or less, this year they totaled 821. There was an abundance of Ring-necked Ducks; Redheads were slightly higher than last year; Mallards, Canvasback and American Widgeon were down; no European Widgeon showed up on the count, but there was a mid-December record.

Aside from the census, there was a very good showing of Harlequin Ducks and both Eiders. Our most remarkable waterfowl record this winter was the shooting of three Fulvous Tree Ducks on western Great South Bay near Sexton Island, December 22, out of a flock of six or eight.

Abbreviations: J Bea — Jones Beach.

Observers: IA — I. Alperin; WA — W. Astle; JB — John Bull; JE — J. Elliott; Gewecke — Mr. & Mrs. G. Gewecke; JL — Mrs. G. Lamoueux; RL — R. Latham; EM — E. Mudge; EMc — Mrs. E. McMullen; EMo — E. Morgan; DP — D. Puleston; QCBC — Queens County Bird Club; GR — G. Raynor; CW — C. Ward.

**Loons — Ducks:** Both Common and Red-throated Loons were down as were Horned Grebes. There was a Red-necked Grebe at J Bea, Mar 17. Singles of Snowy and American Egret were at J Bea, Mar 16 (CW). Whistling Swan: Several reports, two, Dec 27, 28 at South Haven (GR); two, at J Bea Mar 23 (JE, EM). Numerous reports of flocks of Canada Geese flying over throughout Mar. European Widgeon: one, East Hampton Dec 15 (GR). No Common Teal reports. Shovelers scarce. Greater Scaup down in numbers as were Bufflehead and Oldsquaw. Harlequin Duck: two, at Orient Pt., Feb 10 (GR, DP). Common Eider quite plentiful off Orient and Montauk. King Eider: five, off Montauk, Jan 12 (GR, DP); also a small flock at Montauk, Jan 26 (QCBC). Fulvous Tree Duck: six-eight, Great South Bay Dec 22 (JB).

**Hawks — Owls:** Sharp-shinned Hawk: one, Montauk Dec 15 (GR). Cooper's Hawk: one, Jan 1 Manorville (GR). Red-shouldered Hawk: one, Mar 25, 26 Brookhaven (DP). Rough-legged Hawk rather scarce. Golden Eagle: one, South Haven, "an immature changing to adult plumage, clearly identified," Dec 26 to Jan 6 (DP, GR). Bald Eagle: two immatures, wintered, seen until Mar 15, South Haven. Pigeon Hawk: one, Dec 23, West Hampton (GR); one seen during winter, J Bea (CW). Duck Hawk: presumably an escape (wearing falconer's jesses). King Rail: one, Dec

29, 30 Mill Neck (JL, WA). Virginia Rail: one, Dec-Feb 3, Manorville (GR). Semi-palmated Plover: one, Dec 29, Shinnecock (GR). Ruddy Turnstone: one, Dec 29, Shinnecock (GR). Greater Yellow-legs: two, Dec 29, Shinnecock (GR). Oystercatcher: one, Mar 30 Moriches (QCBC). Woodcock: several reports throughout this winter, Mill Neck, Northport and Tackapausha Preserve. Iceland Gull: one, Jan 12, Montauk (DP, GR). Dovekie: two dead in Seaford in Dec (EMo); two, Dec 7, Moriches, one dead on lawn, one alive in creek (GR). Barn Owl: one, Dec 27 and Jan 3, Brookhaven (DP); one, Feb 16 Montauk (GR). Long-eared and Short-eared Owls: several reports, somewhat scarcer than last year. Great Horned Owl: three reports — one, central Suffolk County; two, mid-Feb, Orchard Beach. Saw-whet Owl: one, freshly killed, Jan 12 Montauk (GR).

**Goatsuckers — Shrikes:** Kingfisher: wintered at Crcbmeadow marsh (EMc). Red-bellied Woodpecker: one, present mid-Dec and Mar 25, Wantagh (Gewecke). Phoebe: one, Mar 8, Pt. Washington (R. Cioffi); one, Mar 17, Northport (EM). Tree Swallow: present at J Bea in early Mar. Purple Martin: Mar 9 (very early) Montauk (DP, GR). Tufted Titmouse: three Dec into Jan and Feb, Wantagh (Gewecke); six at Smithtown and four or more at feeder in Center — each most of the winter (GR); also seen in several other locations. Carolina Wren: two wintered, Greenport (RL); two, Northport (EMc). Mockingbird: half-a-dozen reports. Brown Thrasher: singles at Orient and at Greenport (RL). Robin: several during winter at Orient (RL). The Bluebird shows an increase with six seen at Orient, Mar 15 (RL); nine, Jan 28, Mill Neck (E. Fruson); eight, Dec 15 Montauk (GR). Water Pipit: several small bands, up to 20 birds at Orient (RL). Northern Shrike: one, Mar 8, Pt Washington (it killed an House Finch) (J. Waite); one, Dec 15 Montauk (GR). Loggerhead Shrike: one, Jan 26 Montauk (QCBC).

**Warblers — Sparrows:** Warblers — Orange-crowned: one or two reports; Black-throated Green: one Dec 4 (latest) Northport (EMc); Pine: one, Mar 25, Westbury (JL); Palm: one, Jan 5 Freeport (CW). Yellow-breasted Chat: one, Dec 15 Montauk; one, Center Moriches, Dec 16-21; one, early Dec to Jan 12 (when found dead) Moriches (GR). Baltimore Oriole: one, Dec 8, Cutchogue (P. Stoutenburg). Red-winged Blackbird: strays during the winter, 25, Mar 4, Orient (RL). Rusty Blackbird: one, Dec 6 Northport (EMc); two, same place, Mar 10 (EM). Dickcissel: one at feeder, Dec 2 to late Jan, East Moriches (J. Bennett); one daily, East Morion (DP). Evening Grosbeak: appeared around Feb 26 in eastern Suffolk Co. (DP); 50, Mar 15 at Eastport (GR); several small flocks, Feb 1 through Mar at Orient (RL). Purple Finch: in groups up to 15 birds the whole period (RL); several early Mar reports in Western Long Island. Redpoll: two, Feb 10 Orient (GR). Siskin: two flocks in Feb, one of 75 birds, Feb 24, Orient (RL), the other of 40 birds Feb 21 at Gilgo (IA). Towhee: two wintered in Orient (RL); also many Cardinals at feeding stations. Ipswich Sparrow: four or five locations; one, Mar 9 Montauk (GR). Savannah Sparrow: a few wintered, first increase Mar 24 (RL). Fox Sparrows returned in early Mar. Lapland Longspur were more frequent than normally in winter at Orient, as many as 20 in a flock (RL). Both Snow Buntings and Horned Larks were very scarce this winter where usually flocking on open fields. Only one flock of about 200 Snow Buntings at Orient in Jan; last seen, Mar 22 (RL).

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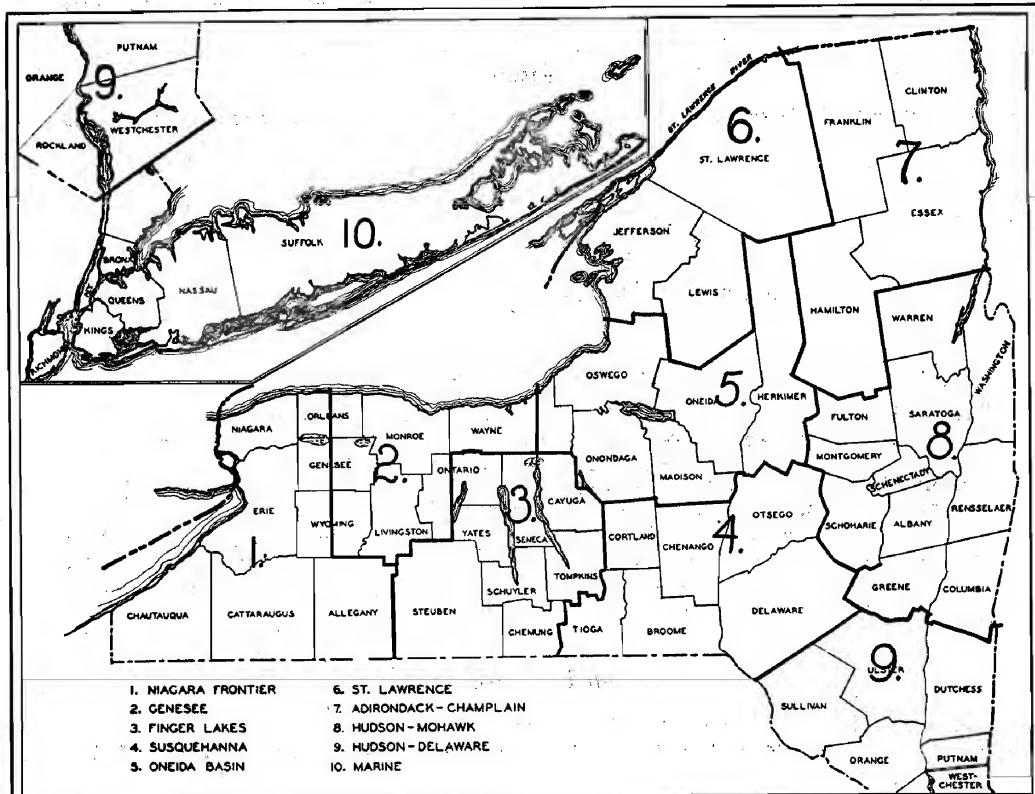
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The Library Wilson Ornith. Soc.  
Zoolog. Record, Aves Section, British Museum of Natural History, England  
Biological Abstracts, Editor, Dr. David E. Davis, Dept. of Zool. Penn. State University, University Park, Pa.

NOTE: Credit and thanks for preparing these lists of members, member clubs, exchanges and subscriptions belong to our retiring Treasurer, Mrs. Lillian Stener. After January 1, 1963 send new addresses and changes of address to our new Treasurer, Kenneth D. Niven, 61 Broadway, Monticello. Ed.

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For descriptions of Regions see Kingbird Vol. IV, Nos. 1 and 2

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